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POETICAL

SCRAPS.

By THOMAS CLIO RICKMAN.

VOL. II.

God made the Country, and Man made the Town.

Cowper.

POETICAL

SCRAPS.

BY

THOMAS CLIO RICKMAN.

AUTHOR OF

THE EVENING WALK; LETTER TO MR. PITT; TO THE BISHOP OF LANDAFF, &c. &c.

VOL. II.

Off hand and various, as occasion leads,
The bard's unstudied, devious theme proceeds:
He scorns the line, however smooth it flow,
" That tends to make one honest man his foe."
He, travelling life's eventful road along,
Beguiles some moments with disportive song;
Whistles and sings his ardent breast to cheer,
Thinks for himself,...dares laugh,...and be sincere.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, UPPER MARY-LE-BONE STREET;

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THE

FALLEN COTTAGE;

A POEM.

Affectionately inscribed to my brother-in-law,

CAPEL LOFFT.

"God made the country, and man made the town."

COWPER.

In Urbe Luxuries creatur; ex Luxuria Avaritia existat necesse est; ex Avaritia erumpat Audacia; inde omnia Scelera et Maleficia gignuntur. Vita autem hæc rustica, quam tu agrestem vocas, Parsimoniæ, Diligentiæ, Justitiæ Magistra est.

Cic. pro Roscio.

THE

FALLEN COTTAGE.*

IF aught in rustic guise may stop thine eye,
PHILANDER: if the manners of times past,
Unpolish'd and uncouth, yet warm and honest,
May with delight detain thee; O unbend,
And give thy willing ear! awhile forget
And yield to short oblivion all the ties
Of civil labour and the toil which oft'
The patient good for the unworthy bear.
In the strict scale of plain unbiass'd reason
Weigh, (for thou knowest well to balance truth;)
Weigh, and pronounce if thy dear country yet,
From polish'd arts increas'd, from science grown

* This poem, since it was printed in 1785, has undergone a thorough revision and correction, and above one hundred lines have been added to it.

To manhood, hath acquir'd true benefit?
Doth now fair Virtue's bud, with influence
Superiour, spring more vigorous? moral worth
Or social feelings, or domestic, now
Do they above their ancient standard mount?
And chaste Religion, doth she purer flow,
Or with seraphic warmth, the dross of earth
Purge from this poor terrestrial? or say,
Hath not corruption grown to giant size,
And large encroachments on the people's rights,
Subverted half the blessings of the land?
Is not fair Virtue, moral sense and social,
Is not Religion's self a fleeting shade
That slips unheeded by regardless man?

Feed then our minds, sweet mistress of illusion,
With the dear memory of ages past,
When naked truth and plain sincerity,
Without one folding in the heart, appear'd
In all the intercourse of man with man:
But chiefly, as along the stream thou glid'st
Of memory, thy sportive pencil draw,
And paint the virtues of a rustic life.
So let thy bard, in humble strains,

Responsive, as thy dictate shall inspire
The Cottage and the lowly cottager,
His antient manners and his life rehearse
In words not unharmonious: devious long
A truant wanderer from his native plains,
Returning, grant him now, and often hence
In sportive numbers there to woo the muse.

Where now the moping owl, at dusky eve,
Sends forth her melancholy note, and, perch'd,
Sits on the mouldering ruins;...where the yew,
Though scath'd by many a winter, on yon hill,
Fearless regards the storm, still trim and green;...
Where the dull toad unseen and silent lurks,
Latent by day among spontaneous weeds,
At night crawls forth to suck the poisonous juice
That from each baneful rancorous herb transpires:...
Where crumbling mortar, mixing with the earth,
Solicits the rank nettle to erect
It's sharp and biting head above the top
Of yonder shapeless and uneven fragments,
Once stood a cottage:...neat was the abode,
Fair and frequented oft' by neighbouring swains,
Who led a peaceful life in humble joy,

In independence, freedom, plenty, ease,
And purity sincere; ere luxury,
Foul sorceress! with all her bloated pride,
And crooked policy, and griping power,
Had drawn weak man from happiest innocence.

It's master, lord of some few acres nigh,
With decent plenty crown'd his humble board,
And welcom'd every guest: an honest clown,
In the vain form of idle compliment,
Untutor'd and in fashion's proud address.
His soul was open, generous, and brave,
Disdaining hollow and delusive arts,
And smiles fallacious: nature taught his tongue
Accents of manly freedom, that declar'd
No guile lurk'd there. Did he invite a friend
To share in mirth and joy convivial,
Rough was his manner, for he added force
And pull'd him to his table. Kindest force
It was, precluding thus refusal, bashful and unwish'd
For answer. Far different they in courts
Who smile and smile, and when they speak most fair
Feel not the warmth of blunt sincerity.
Here all was friendship, all was social truth.

Here, ere the hand of all devouring time
Had levell'd with the ground this homely mansion,
Here blaz'd the social hearth, and decency,
The housewife's care, in simple neatness shone;
Nor was she scant of rural ornament;
Or cleanliness, the female's truest pride.

Rude vessels on the board in order rang'd
Of wood were seen; for richer was not then
Of common use: nor yet the costlier ware
Of Burslem, since renown'd, or China's pride;
But beach, instead, of various workmanship,
Or ash, or sycamore supplied their bowl:
In which their simple fare, each chearful morn
Of food nutritious, but not season'd high,
Gave health and vigour to laborious toil;
For higher days a rich reserve there stood
Of pewter, shining in a scatter'd row,
With earthen cups of many an antique form
To arrest the gazer's eye; or when a friend
Superiour came, his nicer taste to please,
And crown with rustic elegance the feast.

Not far from these was heard the constant clock,
That with vibrations solemn measur'd time:
It's case with true love knots all o'er bedeck'd,
And hieroglyphic figures, or, perchance,
Some dolorous ballad, BEWICK and young GRAHAM

The table next, whose well rub'd surface shone,
Had place, and to the window closely stood;
The window with historic legends grac'd
The noble feats of mighty TOMMY THUMB,
TOM HICKATHRIFT, or he, more glorious far,
The giant killing JACK, whose fame inspir'd
The low born hero, and from peaceful fields
And rural habitudes, oft' sent him forth
In climes remote, to tempt disasterous chance,
And all the tide of fluctuating war.

So, if the humble with the great we may
Compare unblam'd, young AMMON's rapid spear
Shot, like a comet, through the eastern world,
And JULIUS, and the ever gallant SWEDE,
Burst forth to deeds of highest hardiment.

Here too with care were fix'd collected songs,
The work of half an age, whose amorous strains,
Or tragic, often moved the damsels fair,
That once bloom'd here, with pangs of keenest woe.
For, as they sung, the melting ditty's theme
Forc'd from the lucid orb the trickling tear;
Nature prevail'd, and from the unconscious eye
Of innocence unlock'd the generous sluice,
Whence flow the streams of native tenderness.

For who, unmov'd could sing brave PERCY's fate,
Or gallant DOUGLAS with an arrow slain?
Or who could sighless hear the widow'd lover
Sadly complaining upon YARROW's banks?
Or fair MATILDA own an equal flame
To the young chieftain of the brave CLAN ROSS?
Unhappy pair! to ruthless foes betray'd.
With these, and many more of love-sick maids,
Of slighted vows, false swains, and broken hearts,
Hours stole by unheeded,...whilst o'er the breast
Soft pity spread a sympathetic glow.

The elbow chair, like great ATRIDES' sceptre,
From sire to son, in a successive race,

Transmitted down, majestic fill'd its nook :
Of gothic structure, carved in varied form ;
Where, interspers'd with foliage, you might see
The founder's name, and eke the year of God.
Easy be sure it was ; and gentle rest
Gave the possessor, when from work he came,
His labour ended with the setting sun.
Then, conscious joy and pride his bosom swell'd :
For, though the insolence of lordly wealth
Spurns the poor rustic, as a drudging slave
Incapable of relish ; oft' he feels
A joy more justly founded, and more firm
Than the light pleasures of superiour life.
He rose when morning blushes into light,
With health he rose, and hail'd the soaring lark ;
To crop the hedge luxuriant, plow the glebe
Direct in furrows, or to sow the grain.

Say, pamper'd sons of elegance and ease,
Who seek the tardy moments to beguile
With artificial bliss, beseems it thus
A lowly swain, rapt with delight, to view
Nature's great works, and joy where nature joys ?
Or better suits it with the human mind,

Dissolv'd in dissipation, loose and weak,
To fly her haunts, and pace with nimble feet
Where folly points, and fashion leads the way?...

Ah! little know ye what a balmy gale
Yon downs, with lawn o'erspread, are wont to breathe!
What flocks are seen, or on their steepy sides,
Or on their lofty tops, cropping wild thyme
From off it's velvet bed! meantime the shepherd,
And near him couch'd his lurcher, watchful sits,
Lest on another's springing corn, or mead
They chance to stray.

O'er these our swain would prowl
When sober evening spread her mantling shade,
And tinkling sheep bells died upon the breeze.
Whilst in the covert of yon western bank,
With sweetbriars wild and bushes thick o'erset,
The nightingale her liquid note prolong'd,
And solemn usher'd in the gloom of night.

These were his joys and as on these he thought
His vows flew up to heaven; the bounteous gifts

Dealt forth in nature, rais'd his love, and claim'd
The just return of tributary praise.

Happy, thrice happy clowns, who thus in peace
Enjoy the earth's best gifts, with them content!
How few whom fortune with a fostering hand
Has nurs'd, and given to drink insatiate
Of misnam'd pleasure, look with eye benign,
With warm benevolence, and kind regard
Upon the husbandman's domestic worth!
Yet he, a nation's glory, and her strength,
With firmest breast is equal to defend
Her property, and with his generous toil
Supply in full abundance all her wants,
All her true wants; the rest are but her bane.

For what is commerce, what are India's spoils,
What the rich produce of each far sought clime,
But means to furnish riot, and debase
Our nature?...what is useful, for her good
Sufficient, Providence has amply given
To Britain's happy soil....and warn'd to shun
Vain and corruptive superfluities:

With her own peace, freedom, and bliss content;
The friend and not the plunderer of mankind.

See the aspiring tops of yonder elms
Moss clad, and thick with many a shadowy branch,
That in a row avert the western storm.
These to posterity were thought a due,
And rear'd to form the cool and safe retreat,
Where peace, and sweet content, and love might dwell.

How happy they, who blest in fate like this
By their own fire, with sober thought, and sage
Reflection fed, from many a winning tale
Of ancient wisdom drawn; who, safe retir'd,
In love, and friendship, taste, and science rich,
Hear oft the wintry blast, and beating rain,
With elemental strife impetuous rage!...
But heaven permits to few this bliss to share,
Uncertain bliss! and transient at the best,
Witness this scene that tells a mournful tale!....

The late possessor of this small domain
Was hapless COLIN:...train'd to rustic life,

To feats of hardihood, and wholesome toil,
He courted here the muses and the lyre.
Each generous passion glow'd within his breast,
And love's fine ardours occupied his soul.
Near to this sweet, sequestered, rural spot,
The gentle, soft, angelic PHÆBE bloom'd;
Her form all grace, her countenance all love.
A mutual passion burning, pure, refin'd,
Liv'd in their hearts, and made them only one.
Here, to each dear connubial bliss alive,
Endearing and endear'd their days flew on;
And love and rapture mark'd them for their own.

So 'twas till death in a tremendous hour,
The angelic PHÆBE from her COLIN tore;
Then wander'd wide the lover, smitten deep
With agony and grief, and left this cot,
Where bliss till now had fill'd his measure full,
To utter waste...as if the happy land
Of a possessor had not labour'd here!

Thus heaven directs it's ways, and throws o'er dark
Futurity a veil, kind to conceal
What to foreknow would cause us endless pain,

Would quite extinguish the gay gleams of hope
That, with alluring prospect, draw us on,
To bear from day to day life's pressive burthen.

Oh! may no vengeance in the store of fate
Pour on Britannia's sons it's pointed wrath,
And lay their once fam'd honours in the dust;
But timely wisdom curb each growing ill,
External, or internal if it be;
Nor ever let their hapless fall become
The theme of bards, as oft' of Rome they sing,
Now waste and ruinous, by mining arts
Excess, and pride, and spoil, subdued and sunk.

But whither would the muse adventurous roam
To thoughts of ancient lore, and shape her flight
To subjects of deep matter that ill suit
The pastoral reed?...Her's is the task to paint
The simple features of a life obscure...
Still happy, if not yet too late she warn
That rural innocence, simplicity,
And the pure bosom, with its little pleas'd,
Is happiness, is virtue, what beyond

The city prompts of vague and proud desires,
Luxurious and insane, is treacherous all;
The sure precursor of the fall of states,
The bane of nations, misery of the world.

But hence my muse averts her sadden'd eye,
And willing to the simple cot returns.

Oft' underneath this sycamore's brown shade,
Did childish innocence divert it's day;
Too oft' of life the only happy time.
Sweet infancy! devoid of thousand cares,
Which, under pleasing semblance often veil'd,
"Grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength;"
And, when no more they cheat us, still pursue,
Cling to our age, nor leave us till the tomb.

Dear infancy! a thousand toys delight
The sportive fancy; all is peace within,
And health, and appetite, and wanton play.
Their little footsteps here oft' mark'd the ground.

In airy dances round the well-known tree,
And sports well suited to their infant state.

Oft' in the sun they bask'd;...the sun to them
Shone pleasant, and they felt his vivid ray
With grateful sense....Not so unthinking man,
Who harbours discontent, and frequent pays
The bounties of his God with thankless scorn;
Though nature, opening wide her various stores
To view, displays in many a pleasing form
Her glowing charms, and leads the mind with force
Persuasive to that mighty power, that gave
All these to happiness; to raise man's thoughts
To joy, to wonder, and to boundless praise.

Around their wintry fire, methinks I see
The little group, with whom dwelt careless mirth
In unaffected guise. Now would a song,
In the rude accents of an artless swain,
Echo from the low roof and narrow walls;
Or, breath'd in maiden softness, trembling steal
Sweet on the little space:...Or Hodge a tale
Of humour slyly told, with waggish leer,
And made the chimney ring with bursts of glee.

For many a wit is found within the vale
Of humble life, and but distinguish'd there
By natural gibes, and far-fetch'd curious saws.

Here too they romp'd: the neighbouring swains came here
With ardent love, and strove by mirth to catch
The blushing fair; apt are the fair to chuse
The youth of spirit, and the youth of glee.
And when one sat more serious than the rest,
Refusing still to join the sportive train,
His stool they tript, and all upon the floor
The sulky lubber lay ...Meanwhile the sire,
And with him, bending o'er the languid flame,
Sat pleas'd his ancient dame, and laughing call'd
To mind their youthful frolicks. In these walls
The merry REBECK too it's sprightly notes
Sounded, and often to the mazy dance
Call'd forth the lads and lasses of the plain.
A fairer groupe not DIAN's self could boast;
Such as she visited the Mantuan dream,
As oft' she led her nymphs, in sportive train.
By moonlight forth, or on EUROTA's bank,
Or DELIAN CYNTHUS' heaven aspiring top.

Happy such days! and days like these there were
In former times, when pride was not a guest
With rural life. Social all, and kind,
Frequent they join'd harmoniously to share
The festive day, or summer's lengthen'd eve.

By good old custom all were welcome there;
The lowest hind...there genial freedom reign'd,
And decent humour curb'd by native sense.
There unalloyed from nature's purest fount,
Clear, simple, vital spirit, love pour'd forth
Its nectar'd cup, mantling with hopes and fears,
And timid wishes, and half yielding smiles,
And tears of speechless joy, and perfect bliss.

True love, the all cheering ruler of the soul,
Dearest and best of passions! felt alone
By those who kneel at virtue's sacred shrine.

Such were their hours of mirth! but oft' their talk
On dismal stories fell, disast'rous chances,
Murders, and ghosts, and apparitions dire,
And the long train of frightful prodigies.

Appaled they sat, and whilst they heard the tale
Of horror, all around was paleness seen,
And deep attention. " White as milk it came!
" And glided with the swiftness of a dart
" Along the lone dark lane." Another told
" Of headless trunks that stood where three roads met,
" Then chang'd to mastiffs, then were men again."
And oh! more dreadful! " how at midnight hour,
" Strange phantoms drew the curtain."

Thus they rais'd
Ideal terrours. Ev'n now my fancy paints
The fear contracted circle, gazing oft',
As something stalk'd behind. Oft' times the sire
Corrected these wild fancies; though he form'd
From ancient tales a system for himself,
That half admitted of such strange conceits.

His mate the while, all earnest to their talk,
Inmix'd her story, whilst she cast her look,
Fondly inquisitive, to see how look'd her lord;
For to her own, his judgment was a law.

What he believ'd, her heart embrac'd as truth,
Not servile, but by free affection led.

A youth, perhaps, sat listening in some nook,
Just in his school-boy years, and as he drew
Into his soul the monsters of the night,
His labouring breast created images
Great and terrific, such as shake the soul,
And to the bottom harrow up our heart,
And waken all its latent faculties.

Perchance in such a school great Avon's son
First felt the sovereign impulse strike his soul,
Which, by degrees, expanding, led the bard
Of fanciful invention prodigal,
To all those wonders of his tragic muse
That please in wildness. Yet still who would desire
Genius superiour, when the sons renown'd
Of fame, in every age and clime have starv'd,
Neglected, and unpitied, and forgotten;
Or, if successful, ruined by success.
Or, if not thus, by high sensations torn,
Have liv'd the victims of those fairest powers,

Which filled their hearts, expanded all their soul,
The glorious powers of sentiment and thought.
Have felt that health fled from their weary couch;
The envy of the learn'd, the scorn of fools,
The contumelious grace of wealth have felt;
And felt with pangs, which none but they can feel,
A brother's fondness wither'd at the heart,
A child's ingratitude...a parent's hate:
The agonizing wounds of hopeless love:
The weariness of long protracted hope,
And alienated friendship's icy look:
Untimely death of all their soul held dear,
Or change than death yet worse....and inly pined,
That tenderest, highest, purest energies,
But added sharpness to severest woe.
Such is the fate of genius, when the world
Mingles its poisons with that heavenly stream.

Far happier he, unknowing and unknown,
Whom rural scenes engage, and humbler arts;
And, though within his bosom nature sow'd
Prime seeds of poesy, and thoughts sublime,
His scanty lot forbad their rising growth.

Forbad him tread the barren paths of fame,
Barren of comforts...but of ills how rife!

Yet let the high prerogative which heaven
To few indulges, nor to them unmix'd,
With pangs and trials of conflicting sense,
Of every highest joy, and keenest woe;
Yet, let not genius be esteem'd a curse.
It is as we employ it: as we guide
Our hearts beneath its rapid impulse urg'd
To every noblest good, or utmost ill.
A blessing in its proper tendency
It is than worlds more precious...use it well,
Ye who possess it; vindicate its worth:
Just to yourselves...to genius, and to heaven.

Boast they who will of an enlighten'd age,
Of polish'd manners, and of sense refin'd;
Still let the muse with sacred candour throw
Her flowers, and of her praise the incense spread
There only, where true merit challenges.
If polish'd manners lead to dissolute,
In vain the blazon of the seeming fair,

In outward show, solicits her chaste voice
To give applause; her sentence must condemn
The bright exteriour, hollow all within,
And void of substance. To meek innocence,
To chaste desires, and bounded appetites,
(Bounded by reason, by right reason's rules,)
She willing turns her ever eager eye,
There pours her gift of tributary song,
And to such virtues builds her awful shrine.

Expansive thus the heated fancy roams
Through ages past; views, as if still in prime,
These mouldering heaps, as these were living yet,
Whose frail built walls could yet survive their lords.

Indulging fancy, onward might we range,
Nor count the fleeting moments which glide by
For other uses than disportive verse.

To these our care be now; well it beseems
The muse's votaries, humble as they be,
Though scorn'd and spurn'd at by the swollen great,
The meaner offices of life to fill.

Mean in account of many...not so deem'd
By wisdom, and by virtue, and by heaven;
These judge of acts by motive and by use,
Valuing the humble toils of daily life,
Well fill'd, above the highest prize which e'er
Ambition offer'd to the grasp of guilt.

Vainly, I ween, nurs'd on the downy lap
Of partial fortune, pamper'd by her smiles,
And borne triumphant down the stream of life,
Vainly the proud imagine their's the state
To which we best are fitted, and to which
The truly wise aspire. Is not the pine,
More to the storm obnoxious than the shrub,
Lowly, but shelter'd from the howling blast?

Your's, sons of luxury, be your's the glare
Of vaunting pomp...be mine a competence;
So shall disease be your's, and appetites
Surcharg'd, whilst I, within the tranquil shade,
With no false guide to point pretended truth,
No mysteries to embarrass mental bliss,
Or deity degrade and humanize;

Unclouded all my faculties, my mind
Untainted by debasing vice, may scan
The purposes of heaven, and sighless sink,
Acquainted with myself, into the grave.

LETTER

TO

MY WIFE,

FROM DEAL BEACH.

June, 1800.

My dear JANE!

WHILE at my feet the sportive billows play,
And prompt by soothing sounds the tender lay;
While the proud sun resplendant rides on high,
And cloudless shines the bright cœrulean sky,
With stately motion round diversely glide
The awful ship of war in towering pride;
While numerous traders and the scarce-seen boat,
On ocean's hardly ruffled bosom float;
While Gallia's much lov'd land her head displays,
And her white cliffs reflect the solar blaze,
Her triple colours waving to the sight,
While scenes like these my ravish'd view delight;

Say, my soul's treasure! can that heart refrain,
Alive to all excess of joy and pain,
Amidst such heavenly scenery as this,
When all around breathes harmony and bliss,
To heave towards thee, its blessed counterpart,
Warm, energetic, undebas'd by art,
Its tenderest feelings? which, where'er I range,
Towards thee and ours never can know change.

To north and south the lofty Forelands stand,
A welcome sight to ships from every land;
As in the Downs secure from many a gale,
Waiting a wind, they ride with nice furl'd sail.

Delicious scenery! here on the strand,
Reclin'd at ease, my table, knee and hand,
My bosom throbs its various delights,
And all it can of what it feels indites.
My carpet beach, my canopy the skies,
I pen my thoughts and wishes as they rise,
But chief towards thee! my ardent fancy flies.
Doubly to relish this, I sighing say,
My JANE should be companion of my way;
And our young cherubs too, should dance around,
To make the utmost human bliss abound.

Debarr'd of this, my spirit wings to thee
Some faint, slight portraiture of what I see;
And rapt imagination as I go,
Makes thee a part of all I see and know.

Of all the view France most attracts my eye,
Provokes the eager wish, and ardent sigh.
Oh! may her sons and daughters clearer see
Equality's* the medium to be free;
May truth and bland philosophy entwine,
Throughout its land the myrtle and the vine;
May war and scourges, fury, rage, and fire,
Before immortal reason's ray retire,
All, all appeals to force be laid aside,
Nor demagogues inflame, corrupt, divide;
And other nations, boastful of its plan,
Obtain from pole to pole the rights of man;
So shall the false, corrrupt, and vicious fall,
Peace, comfort, freedom, be the lot of all.

Amidst these lovely scenes, one object still
Appals my frame, and makes by blood run chill;

* By Equality I mean exactly the reverse of what the corrupt, imposing, and pensioned, explain it to mean.

Lo! to the westward, mark that castle stand,
His residence, the pest of every land.
If aught, my JANE! could counteract my joy,
And the blest feelings of my soul annoy,
'Twou'd be to know that such a being lives,
Who ne'er indulg'd the throb affection gives;
Incapable of friendship;...cold, stone cold
At heart! and without courage, bold;
Cunning, and superficial, prating ever,
But not discriminating, wise, or clever;
Who, o'er a desart of ideas pours
Of words a deluge, barren as these shores;
Who all mankind may rue holds Britain's helm
When blood, and misery, the world o'erwhelm.

Farewell! for now the shades of eve prevail,
And nearly lost appears the distant sail;
The sun-set gun resounds along the shore,
And the gay pennant floats in air no more;
Now soothing twilight puts her mantle on,
And all day's brilliant scenery is gone;
Divine serenity her reign extends,
And heaven itself on all around descends.

IMPROMPTU

ON

THE CLOSE

OF

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.*

I ASK'D of a poet, I met t'other day,
What fine things he had of the century to say.
To fine things, said the bard, I have bidden adieu,
And am seeking alone the simple and true.

* The reader may perhaps excuse a trivial piece of poetry, as it will direct his attention to the following picture of the 18th century, extracted from memoirs of the year 2500 written seven and twenty years ago by MERCIER in Paris, and translated soon after into English by DR. HOOPER. This book, perhaps, the best calculated to mend the heart, improve the judgment, elevate the affections, and raise the human character to true nobility, and

The approach of fresh centuries I see with concern,
And that mankind have yet so much to unlearn:
And I pray that the century nineteen may prove,
An æra of wisdom, of prudence, and love;

happiness, (to delineate still further the 18th century) was sold for waste paper by an eminent bookseller, who, at the same moment, gave five hundred guineas for a very miserable and contemptible novel about a haunted castle!

Memoirs of the year 2500, is lately again re-printed, and may be had of any bookseller, price 5s.

"I stood for some time regarding the eighteenth century, induced by my ancient connexion with it. It was represented by the painter under the figure of a woman. A number of borrowed and costly ornaments loaded her proud and delicate head. Her neck, her arms, and breast, were covered with pearls and diamonds. Her eyes were bright and sparkling; but a smile somewhat affected gave an air of grimace to her mouth. Her cheeks were covered with a flaming red. Art appeared to be mixed with her words, as with her looks; they were alluring, but not true. She held in each hand a long rose-coloured ribband, which seemed ornamental, but concealed two iron chains, by which she was strongly bound. She had, however, liberty enough to gesticulate, to prance, and gambol; and this she did to excess, in order (as it should seem)

That the errors and miseries in centuries before,
May never be known in society more;
That free use be permitted the tongue, press, and pen,
And peace and good will dwell alone amongst men.

to disguise her slavery, or at least to make it more easy and pleasing. I examined her figure with attention; and tracing the drapery of her vestment, I perceived that her pompous robe was at the bottom in tatters and covered with dirt. Her naked feet were plunged in a kind of bog; her lower extremities were as hideous as her head was brilliant. She appeared in this dress not much unlike one of those strumpets who walk the streets at the beginning of the night. I discovered behind her a number of children, with meagre, livid aspects, who cried to their mother while they devoured a morsel of black bread. She endeavoured to hide them with her robe, but between the tatters those wretched infants still appeared. At a distance in the picture were seen superb palaces, buildings of marble parterres artfully laid out, vast forests peopled with deer, where the horn resounded from afar. But the country, half uncultivated, was filled with wretched peasants, who, harrassed by fatigue, sunk under their burthens: then appeared men who forced away part of them to the wars, and took from the rest their beds and their kettles."

EPITAPH,
IN
NEWHAVEN CHURCH YARD,
IN THE
COUNTY OF SUSSEX.

TO THE MEMORY OF

THOMAS TIPPER,

Who died May 14, 1784. *Aged* 68 *Years.*

READER! with kind regard this grave survey,
Nor heedless pass where TIPPER's ashes lay.
Honest he was, ingenious, blunt, and kind,
And dar'd do, what few dare do...speak his mind.
Philosophy and history well he knew;
Was vers'd in physic, and in surgery too;
The best old stingo he both brew'd and sold,
Nor did one knavish act to get his gold.
He play'd thro' life a varied, comic part,
And knew immortal HUDIBRASS by heart.

Reader! in real truth, such was the man,...
Be wiser, better,...laugh more if you can.

THE

DOOR THAT OPENS WITH A LATCH.

AN ODE,

WRITTEN IN THE WEALD OF SUSSEX,

and Affectionately inscribed to

WILLIAM WHEELER, ESQ.

OF THAT COUNTY.

" How happy in his low degree,
" How rich in humble poverty is he,
" Who leads a quiet country life,
" Discharged of business, void of strife,
" And from the griping scrivener free.
" Nor trumpets summon him to war,
" Nor dreams disturb his morning sleep,
" Nor knows he merchants gainful care,
" Nor fears the dangers of the deep.
" The clamours of contentious law,
" And court and state he wisely shuns;
" Nor brib'd with hopes, nor dar'd with awe,
" To servile salutations runs."

DRYDEN'S Horace.

THE

DOOR THAT OPENS WITH A LATCH.

AN ODE.

FINE folks, and fine houses, are nothing to me,
Nor care I for splendour or state;
From fashion and nonsense I wish to be free,
And the purse proud and crafty I hate;
But I love all the charms to the cot that attach,
Where the door of rusticity opes with a latch.

Crouded cities are full of unnatural hordes,
Where folly, and fuss, and misery combine;
Full of pompous professions, and unmeaning words,
Where truth is kick'd out for the frothy and fine;
O bear me from these, to the cot crown'd with thatch,
Where the door of simplicity, opes with a latch.

O bear me from these to the hamlet's dear green,
Where mirth gaily leads on the hours;
Where nature exhibits each beautiful scene,
And melody gladdens the bowers.
The parting sun's ray o'er yon downs let me catch,
Then repose in the cot, whose door opes with a latch.

Dear simplicity, too, of mind and of mein!
Most charming of qualities, flourishes here;
Here beauty bright blazes, and true love, its queen,
Lights up in the breast each affection sincere.
For ever far hence, be the money made match,
Nor the cottage pollute, whose door opes with a latch.

The greatest of foes to the good of mankind,
Was he who two houses adjoining first built;
Then to town, and town manners, away flew the hind,
To finery, disquiet, and slavery, and guilt.
To cities repair'd, every mischief to hatch,
And left honesty's roof, and the door with the latch.

How hateful the sound of the thundering hall,
Where impudent lackies, and ladies, and lords,
Begilt and bepainted, affectedly squall,
Unhealthy and solemn, no hearts and all words;
With trouble and pain each disquiet they hatch,
Such as reach not the roof whose door opes with a latch.

Here, too, at the close of the busier day,
When the bright orb of glory descends in the west,
And steals to the tomb, a lingering ray,
Where my soul's early partner retir'd to her rest,
Let me dwell on her virtues which nothing can match,
Then retire to the cot, whose door opes with a latch.

O! grant me from noise and cabal far away,
With the children of lowly pursuits to abide;
O'er the uplands, the woods, and the downs let me stray,
'Midst nature's fine scenery, and with her reside.
Exult in her beauties, her glowing tints catch,
As I sit at my door, that still opes with a latch.

Blest scenes! each domestic delight to improve,
To give vigour to all the emotions of heart,
Nurse of sentiment, taste, and the raptures of love,
To me, and to mine, all thy blessings impart.
Night, morning, and noon, all thy charms will I watch,
Nor the mansion e'er quit, whose door opes with a latch.

SONNET,

TO

AN INFANT AT THE BREAST.

DEAR, lovely babe! equal by birth to all,
While thus thou drain'st my breast, my blood runs chill;
I ask, if thou some future day must fall,
And despots send thee to be kill'd or kill?*

* Suppose the late war, for instance, occasioned the destruction of a million of persons; each individual of these, one with another, upon the least calculation, had bestowed upon it three years care, tenderness, and attention, and was beyond all price to those to whom it belonged; thus, in a war of ten years, three millions of years of parents, or others, protecting affection and endearment were destoyed.—Reader! pursue the reflection, and find, if thou can'st, a more diabolical thing than that called glory, or characters more hellish than war characters.

For thousands daily drop, who each, like thee,
Once claim'd a mother's ever anxious love;
Hung on her bosom, sported on her knee,
And valued were, a world of kings above.

Tormenting thought! oh! ere thou grow'st mature,
May all wars cease, or tyrants, if there be,
Fight their own battles, and each man secure,
By equal rights, and equal laws be free.
So may no mother's care be thrown away,
Nor one hurl millions from the face of day.

A

BENEDICTION.

AT

SAILING OUT OF THE PORT

OF

BARCELONA.

1785.

WRITTEN UPON DECK.

FAREWELL! sweet city, form'd to give delight,
Where endless beauties rush upon the sight;
May ceaseless blessings still to thee be given,
And round thee shower'd the choicest gifts of heaven.
Now, as thy mountains lessen to my view,
And, ere I bid thy lofty towers adieu!
Receive this benediction...'tis sincere...
Warm from the heart, and utter'd with a tear.

Long may thy noble Terrace stem the main,
And ships, rich freighted, from each distant plain
Waft to thy happy sons, with stately pride,
What nature to thy climate has denied.

Still on thy Ramble* may fresh beauties throng;
Still serenaded be with amorous song;
Still in the evening on thy Wall† parade,
And view delighted nature's charms display'd;
Where mountains, heap'd on mountains, grandly rise,
And seem to rush their heads above the skies.

Here scatter'd villas beautify the scene,
And orange groves, and vineyards lie between;
Here the rich melon spreads along the the vale,
And there the lemon scents the grateful gale;
The olive here, appears in pleasing rows,
And there the luscious fig in splendour grows.

* A walk like the Mall, to which the Spaniards have affixed this English name....The Ramble.

† The wall which extends round the city, and commands a very extensive view of the neighbouring country and the Mediterranean.

Where'er you turn, the great and lovely shine,
The bold and beautiful, the grand and fine.

Long may the motley groupe thy Terrace‡ grace,
Peace in each bosom dwell, and smiles adorn each face;
For, when the day's excessive heat is o'er,
And the sea-breeze comes gently to the shore,
Here thousands crowd to take their evening walk,
And mingle with their friends in social talk.
Here the duenna takes her darling care
To see the beaux, and breathe a purer air;
Here benedictines, capuchins, and friars,
Here priests and monks in all their strange attires;
Here swords, and bags, and gowns, fill up the way,
And powder'd petit maitres skip and play:
Here prowl the public nymphs, with veiled face,
Nymphs, for all this, not over full of grace...
Such sprightly scenes depicted here you see,
That every evening forms a jubilee.
Farewell! sweet Barcelona! lovely place!
And may success and peace attend thy race;

‡ The grand evening parade, facing the sea.

May gay good-humour spread her influence wide,
And genuine virtue all your actions guide:
This prayer fulfilled...your forms I matter not,
Or for your saints or crosses care a jot!
All climes and sects some nonsense bear about them,
And 'twould be strange indeed, were you without them.

EPISTLE
TO
MR. COWPER,
On the Publication of his Translation of
HOMER.

Accompanied by a Poem of the Author's.

SIR,

AN humble bard's essay you'll see,
By this his youthful poesy.
One, who, by various fortune tost,
Each bliss has felt, each bliss has lost;
Who every precious joy has known,
And liv'd to see those joys all flown;
Who every trying grief has prov'd,
And liv'd to see those griefs remov'd.
Who far by sea and land has been,
And shifted oft' from scene to scene;
Who oft' with poverty has dwelt,
And each delight of plenty felt;

To whom, thank ever gracious heaven!
Domestic sweets again are given,
And tho' his worldly goods are few,
His blessings far such goods outdo;
For in his little cot is seen,
Rosy-cheek'd health, and peace serene;
Here taste and sentiment abide,
And love and friendship, pure, reside.

This humble bard, in love with song,
Still places your's the first among;
And oft', to heighten all he has said,
Thy charming verse has lent its aid.

But to the point,...I want to view,
Great HOMER, as drest out by you;
Buy him I cannot, and each friend
Or has him not, or will not lend:
Of you, this loan then may I ask,
Immortal author of the task.*

* It may not be unsatisfactory to the reader to acquaint him, that Mr. Cowper replied to these lines, very obligingly gave the author a copy of his Homer, and that the above bagatelle, opened a correspondence between them.

STANZAS,

WRITTEN BY THE SEA SIDE,

NEAR

BRIGHTON,

IN A GALE OF WIND,

Oct. 18, 1801.

Inscribed to Mr. JOSEPH RICKMAN, Jun.

FAMILIAR is that howl, that roar, to me,
And welcome to my soul this dreary scene;
Dear to my view this tost and troublous sea,
The surge white foaming, and the blast so keen.

I hail the horrors that around me throng,
While gathers in the West the tempest black;
And, as terrific wave drives wave along,
And bears the beach in crashing thunder back,

I hail the scene! and in my raptur'd soul,
Dear pensive melancholy mounts her throne,
Subdues each feeling to her drear controul,
And each sublime sensation makes my own.

Amidst my heart's impressive tender glow,
Mix'd with the grandeur of the objects round;
Sweet retrospection! bids the tear to flow,
To soothe it, elevate it, not to wound.

Delicious memory! brings to view again,
Friends and associates, past, long past away;
With whom I've sail'd upon this boisterous main,
With whom in many a distant port been gay.

With whom I've paced thy fretful, murmuring strand,
And talk'd of those we lov'd and absent far;
And sigh'd again to see that happy land
Which held our heart's ador'd...our polar star!

Oft, too, majestic main! thy sands along,
When scarce a zephyr fan'd thy lucid tide,
I've dwelt enraptur'd o'er some classic song,
While lov'd Maria wander'd by my side.

And oft' times when the moon's resplendant ray,
Bespangling far thy scarcely moving wave,
The white cliffs silver'd that o'erhung our way,
Projecting high,...in majesty array'd;

Enamour'd have we prowl'd thy pebbly shore;
Our glowing breasts alike impell'd inspir'd;
And, charm'd with all around us, sought no more,
And felt a present heaven, nor more desir'd.

Thus memory dwells extatic on the past,
And musing melancholy, soothing power!
Mixes her pleasing plaint with every blast,
And throbs my breast responsive to the roar.

Soon may "thy waves be stay'd"! and all serene,
Flow 'twixt the nations blest at length with peace,
May all thy shores hail freedom as their queen,
And slavery, war, and misery, ever cease!

EPITAPH,

ON

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

IMPROMPTU.

1799.

IMPORTANT periods mark'd thy splendid life,
With tyrant men and tyrant means at strife.
Tho' ne'er in Europe,...yet thy well earn'd fame,
Throughout all Europe, made rever'd thy name.
Thus far is true,...but truth must farther tell,
That lucky hits thy bright career befell;
Nor will thy shade this portraiture condemn,
That great events made thee,...and not thou them.

ELEGY,

TO

The much lamented, and much honoured

MEMORY

OF

LADY VISCOUNTESS GAGE,

June, 1783.

" ——Thy amazing excellence shall be
" Fame's triumph in succeeding ages; when
" Thy bright example shall adorn the scene,
" And teach the world perfection!"

SHAKSPEARE.

ELEGY

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

LADY VISCOUNTESS GAGE,

June, 1783.

'TIS not because a title grac'd her name,
Because around her wealth and splendor blaz'd;
'Tis not for these the bard, to lasting fame,
Shall bid her memory live, whom virtue rais'd.

No; curse the gew-gaws, idle phantoms all:
Had these alone been what our GAGE possess'd,
Unwept she might have left this earthly ball,
Unpitied languish'd, and have died unbless'd.

Hear this, ye little great! and mark the rhimes;
Go, live like her, the mother of the poor;
Go, stem with zeal the vices of the times;
Go, feed the hungry, and the weak restore!

Go bid, like her, the wretched cease to mourn,
And wipe the tear from off the weeping eye;
Teach how the long lost wanderer may return,
Then shall you happy live, and blessed die.

Judge not the poet's pen is venal here,
Or this a sacrifice at grandeur's shrine;
Go, see the widow's and the orphan's tear,
And hear how much their praise excelleth mine.

Go, visit yonder village in the vale,*
To every humble cottage round repair;
List but a moment to the pauper's tale,
Thou can'st not doubt this tribute quite sincere.

* Firle, the seat of Lord Gage.

There worn-out age will entertain thine ear
With such recitals, as must chear thy heart;
There GAGE's generous deeds amaz'd thou'lt hear,
In truth's fair language drest, undeck'd by art.

And helpless infancy, with many a sigh,
Heaping unnumber'd blessings on her head,
Shall bid the starting tear bedew thine eye,
Shall bid the rising blush thy face o'erspread:

Such blushes, as remembrance always brings,
When feeling souls survey the world at large;
To see how few, from subjects up to kings,
Truly the duties of this life discharge.

EPIGRAM.

SAYS HENRY, with shrewdness, as lately he sat
With LAURA, &c. in sociable chat,
" The lady who violates once her dear honour,
" Will do it again, nor can trust be plac'd on her."
With vehemence LAURA exclaim'd to MISS PRUE,
" That, that I am certain myself, is not true!"

THE

SICK SAILOR.

AN

EPIGRAM.

A Sailor near the point of death,
The chaplain thus addrest;
Kind sir, ere I resign my breath,
Pray grant a small request.

Propitious heaven implore with me,
To purge my sins away;
O! may the offended deity,
Place me in realms of day.

That our request may claim the care,
  Of heaven's eternal king;
My comrade here, shall join in prayer,
  And to him homage bring.

Not so cries Tom, for I've no need,
  To join in prayer, I thank you;
At leisure I can say my creed,...
  You know mine's but an ague!

ELEGY,

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

The Rev. THOMAS DAVIES,

Vicar of Glynde, in Sussex,

AGED 70 YEARS.

Respectfully inscribed to the Friends of the deceased.

AUGUST, 1789.

" Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
" What, tho' we wade in wealth or soar in fame,
" Earth's highest station ends in....here he lies!
" And dust to dust concludes her noblest song."

YOUNG.

ELEGY,

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

The Rev. THOMAS DAVIES,

Vicar of Glynde, in Sussex.

AGED 70 YEARS.

WHEN from the noisy town I led my way,
Anticipation painted sweet the hours;
Amidst the pleasant grave, and chastely gay,
I saw me seated in their festive bowers.

And thou, dear subject of the elegiac song!
Stood'st forward in the rank of those I love;
With thee I hop'd the evenings to prolong,
And by thy converse every hour improve.

For thy capacious soul was richly stor'd
With all divine and philosophic lore;
Thy search each classic elegance explor'd;
With thee 'twas grace to fall, 'twas bliss to soar.

How oft', when sinking sol, o'er yonder down,
Left the pale moon to mark her steady course,
Hast thou, the heavenly scenery to crown,
With best of reasoning, and with winning force,

Fix'd man's attention to the glorious theme
Of contemplating HIM, whose forming hand
Called forth creation's ever wondrous scheme,
And scattered every beauty through the land.

Thine was the true religion of the heart,
Above absurdity wherever bawl'd;
Of this the unitarian creed made part...
Nor could'st thou bear what ATHANASIUS scrawl'd.

Thine was the talent, 'midst the young and gay,
With lively chat sweet sentiment to blend;
In terms familiar, learning to display,
And still in every walk be virtue's friend.

Observant ever of the generous soil,
Rich agriculture found a friend in thee;
Each scheme for public good still met thy smile,
And all that made, and all that keeps us free.

'Twas thine with meek ey'd charity to dwell,
And watchful candour sat upon thy tongue;
Thou ne'er a false, or unkind tale did'st tell;
Nor on thy lips was baneful flattery hung.

O! may we ever, ever still, like thee,
Bow to that emanation from above,
Heaven's best beloved, immortal charity!
So shall we live like men, and angels prove.

Judge not the muse's strain is venal here,
A long acquaintance sanctifies the verse;
Nor ever was a tribute more sincere,
Nor e'er did poet more of truth rehearse.

Ah! would that heaven had long that hour delay'd,
That gives occasion to the mournful strain;
A little longer could'st thou but have staid!
A little longer!...but the wish is vain.

Heaven knows aright the stated time to move
It's children from this sublunary sphere;
And, tho' it tears them from the friends they love,
It sends a lesson with the sorrowing tear.

A lesson too of most import to all,
To "think nought worth their care beneath the skies,"
But that of passing thro' this nether ball,
So as above the sun at last to rise.

ELEGY,

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

MISS HESTOR DAMAN,

OF SOUTHAMPTON,

AGED 18 YEARS.

Affectionately inscribed to her Brother.

OCTOBER, 1788.

" Early, bright, transient, chaste as morning dew,
" She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to heaven."

YOUNG.

ELEGY,

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

MISS HESTOR DAMAN,

OF SOUTHAMPTON,

AGED 18 YEARS.

'TIS not the elegiac song distress can wave,
Or make the tears of sorrow cease to flow;
Can close reflection with the closing grave,
Or stop the torrent of domestic woe.

The most it can...is lessons to impart,
Of high import, and greatest weight to all;
From death's dread volume to address the heart,
And make the dead upon the living call.

To pull anticipation from her seat,
To do our air-built fabrics quite away;
Our views of promis'd pleasures to defeat,
And learn us to secure and bless to-day.

To make us tread with caution when we mount,
To fix our eye on falling while we rise;
And this our truest wisdom to account,
To make this world a passage to the skies.

O sweet SIMPLICIA! when of late we rov'd
O'er Hampshire's charming plains with comrades gay,
How little thought we, ever dear belov'd!
Thy grave so soon these lessons would convey.

Thy life and death how sadly opportune,
To tell the lovely, brilliant, and the wise,
How all their glittering views may perish soon,
And death seize all that heaven and earth can prize.

For who that knew thee could but forward look,
And see matur'd that genius so divine;
(Which eager "tore the leaf from nature's book)"
Among the first of British painters shine.*

* She excelled in portrait-painting.

With taste correct, thy spotless soul was fraught,
Sweet child of science, sentiment, and ease:
Thine, nice expression, rectitude of thought,
And thine a person heaven design'd to please.

Unerrring nature held the brush for thee!
And grace, thy handmaid, was in every line;
But thy mark'd feature was simplicity...
The purest, gentlest, tenderest heart was thine.

O sweet SIMPLICIA! may we live like thee,
Then shall a rich reward to us be given;
Like thine our dying hours shall joyful be,
Like thine our confidence and faith in heaven.

So, sweet SIMPLICIA!...moralist divine!
Thy life and death our darling theme shall be;
Shall teach us how to value and resign,
And, to be good and happy, copy thee!

THE

OLD INDIAN AND HIS PRISONER.

A TALE.

ON fam'd America's domain,
Where liberty has fix'd her reign,
A stripling, bred to fight and die,
Was forc'd from Indian rage to fly:
His soldiers, who around him fell,
Presag'd the fate he knew too well.

Between two Indians now he stood,
Whose tomahawks requir'd his blood;
And, near to these, an antient sire,
Whose bosom beat with martial fire,
Held towards the officer his bow,
As if to give the deadly blow....

Here mark the strange event of things!
He dropp'd his arrow, slack'd the strings,
Bid the pursuers backward stand,
And took the warrior by the hand,
Led him towards his humble shed,
And heap'd each kindness on his head;
Taught him whate'er he cou'd impart,
And often press'd him to his heart;
Yet view'd him with a tearful eye,
An aching breast, and stifled sigh.

Soon spring return'd with all its charms,
And now the Indians rush to arms.
When, towards the British camp they press'd,
The Indian thus his charge address'd:....

" Say, did not I arrest the knife,
" Uplifted to destroy thy life?
" Hast thou not shar'd each good with me?
" I sav'd thy life, and made thee free:
" Say, wilt thou then the Britons join?
" Wilt thou oppose thine hand to mine?"

To this replied the martial youth,
" My brave protector, hear the truth;

" My life I freely will resign,
" Rather than lift my hand 'gainst thine !"

Now silent stood the Indian chief,
And all his soul was torn with grief;
With earnest look, and voice deprest,
He thus gave utterance to his breast;

" Hast thou a father? doth he live?"
" To me heaven does that blessing give,"
Rejoin'd the youth;...then spoke the sire,
While in his eye beam'd filial fire,
" How wretched must that father be,
" I feel for him, and feel for thee.

" I once possess'd a favourite boy,
" And brave, like thee, my only joy;
" But ne'er that bliss shall know again,....
" My darling was in battle slain;
" Dead at my feet he nobly fell."
* * * * * * * * * * *
Here rising sighs his heart distrest,
And torture wrung his aged breast;
At length his spirits calmer grew,
And thus he spoke with upcast view:...

" Dost thou behold the azure sky ?
" Do nature's beauties charm thine eye ?"
" They do," replied the wondering youth ;...
" Then," said the sire, " observe this truth.
" For me all nature has no charms ;
" Go to thy longing father's arms,
" That he may view with joyful eye,
" That glorious canopy the sky ;
" That nature's beauties, always new,
" May ever greet his ravish'd view ;
" And to him, each revolving day,
" Some fresh felicity display,
" That he may see each morn with joy,
" And gaze with rapture on his boy."

THE LITTLENESS OF HUMAN WISDOM.

AN ODE.

Written at Rotterdam,

AND INSCRIBED MOST RESPECTFULLY TO

EARL STANHOPE.

"Know, man! that God has given thee understanding to "guide thy behaviour, and not to penetrate into the essence of "the things which he has created."

VOLTAIRE.

THE LITTLENESS OF HUMAN WISDOM,

AN ODE.

MAN measures earth, the air he weighs,
The spacious sky above surveys,
  The planetary sphere
Explores;...views suns on suns advance,
And worlds on worlds through heaven's expanse,
  That roll in order there.

But how a single grass doth grow,
A cherry ripen, lily blow,
  To him is quite unknown;
Yet full of pride...temerity!...
Nature's grand scheme he would descry,
  So wondrous learned grown.

By laws his own, destroyeth worlds;
Or new ones into ether hurls;
  Pervades with piercing eye
All things in heaven, in air, on earth;
What cause gives each effect its birth,
  Tho' plann'd by the Most High.

But how his feet obey his will,
At his command, move or stand still,
  He knows not,...yet would tell
(Such his presumptuous confidence)
The Almighty's place of residence;
  Where situated hell.

How God sees, acteth, and commands;
Past, present, future, understands;
  Yet ah! he doth not know,
Himself, how he the sense retains,
Of feeling pleasures, fears, or pains,
  Or doth exist and grow.

Go, wondrous creature! to be good
First learn; go give the hungry food,
  And clothe the naked poor:

Go cherish worth,...true merit prize,
Thy country's happiness devise;
These, these, are in thy power.

This done,...of nature's secrets rare,
Take to the full thy allotted share:
But what was pre-design'd,
Too vast for thee, by heaven's high will,
Superior to all human skill,
Leave to the eternal mind.

To whom these countless worlds belong,
Who made all right, thou judgest wrong,
And over all presides;
Governs, directs the according whole,
Of beauty, order is the soul,...
All to perfection guides.

IMPROMPTU.

ON THE

CHARACTER OF BONAPARTE.

Written at Paris, in 1802.

OF BONAPARTE, much is said,
Some praise his heart, and some his head,
  Some deify, some devil him;
Some loudly trumpet forth his fame,
Others decry his very name,
  And make machines to level him.

Amidst all this I must confess,
That what he is 'tis hard to guess,
  But if it be no sin;
What he is not ev'n half an eye
May very easily espy...
  He's not...a jacobin!

AN

ODE.

WRITTEN ABROAD.

1785.

ON Thames's banks by Thames's stream,
Whilst love and LAURA was the theme;
I tun'd my rural reed so gay,
And happy pass'd the live-long day;
A thousand joys illumin'd my breast,
In every wish and transport blest.

Flow on, dear stream! and be the pride
Of nymphs and swains, that grace thy side;
Whilst many a charming sylvan scene,
Thy lympid waters glide between;

Nymphs, fair as e'er APELLES drew;
And swains, that equall'd are by few:
Flow on, and may'st thou find them still
Blest in their loves, secure from ill.

May they ne'er roam a foreign coast,
To friendship, love, and LAURA lost.
Still memory delights to trace,
The sportive youngsters guiltless face;
A thousand gambols on the green,
And joys that pleas'd as soon as seen;
The vacant laugh, the heart-sprung smile,
And many a trick, and many a wile.
Still memory lives on every scene,
Days all delight, nights all serene.
Ah! little then did fancy show,
The fate severe I'm doom'd to know;
Whilst friendless, far from all that's dear,
Life's melancholy load I bear;
And plaintive write, or musing sigh,
Nor view one ray of comfort nigh.

IMPROMPTU.

TO

THOMAS PAINE.

At Paris, July 1802.

FRANKLIN, your old and faithful friend,
Who wit and truth did always blend;
With energy would oft' declare,
" Where freedom is, my country's there."

And you as oft' would make reply,
While genius sparkled in your eye,
(That eye, where wit and judgment keen,
And brilliant intellect are seen)
" Where freedom is not, that's my land,
" And there I'll live, and make a stand
" Against what tyranny has plan'd."

By this good rule, my friend! I vow,
Your station is most proper now;
Nor need you any farther dance,
Indeed you're quite at home in France.

IMPROMPTU.

WRITTEN ON THE STEYNE,

AT

BRIGHTHELMSTONE.

SAY, after this, is there no safe retreat,
Where fancy, sentiment, and science meet?
Where, tawdry nothingness can never be,
Where all is wise, judicious, lovely, free?
Where scoundrel traffic harms not man's repose,
Where dwelleth not the family of woes?

Say, this scene clos'd, of error, war and strife,
O! is there not for man a happier life?
Where, dropping all the vicious, and the vain,
He health and life eternal shall obtain?

Where fighting, preaching puppets, shall no more
Stain life with superstition, and with gore?
Where all the foul, discarded thro' the piece,
Light shall alone prevail, and darkness cease?

Oh! if there be a world, where all may prove
The charms of friendship, and the bliss of love;
Where nothing is that blasts our blessings here,
Propitious fate! quick snatch me to that sphere.

IMPROMPTU.

TO THE

WHIG CLUB,

On their presenting a sword to

GENERAL KOSCIUSKO.

June, 1797.

WHILE you to KOSCIUSKO give
A sword, his conduct to approve;
Forget not how yourselves may live,
In mankind's best respect and love.

A deal of chatter will not do,
On this the world begins to trample;
Your worth like KOSCIUSKO show
Be good and great, like him, and follow his example.

A

BAGATELLE.

SAYS lovely LAURA, fair and free,
What is true philosophy?
I'll tell thee charming girl, said I,
And made my LAURA this reply:
Seize the present moment fast,
Lose no time, 'tis all thou hast;
Ardent seize, and ere it flee,
Devote it to felicity;
To the present pay thy vow,
Time's but an "eternal now",
Now then, now then, happy be,
This is true philosophy.

AN

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION,

AT

One of the Hermitages,

AT

MONSERRATE, in SPAIN.

1785.

Inscribed to my fellow travellers, Captains BALL and MADGWICK, and Mr. KIRKPATRICK.

HERE rais'd 'bove earth, and all that earth can give,
The world forgetting by the world forgot;
Sequester'd from the haunts of men you live,
And angels guard and bless your sacred lot.

With pitying eye you view the scenes below,
The whil'st remembrance wakes the gushing tear;
Ah! 'tis indeed a world of pain, of woe,
And heaven was kind to guide your footsteps here.

The pageantry of grandeur, state, and wealth,
And all the idle bustle of the throng,
Commerce impure, and prostituted health,
Ah! none of these to your retreats belong.

Here with yourselves conversing day by day,
All nature's beauties ever in your sight;
Your souls from this blest mountain soar away,
And toward their native regions take their flight.

To this heaven sculptur'd rock, and ye good men,
Reluctantly the bard's adieu! is given;
With heavy heart he joins the world again;
For Monserrate, is but one step from heaven.

FAMILIAR EPISTLE

TO

A FRIEND.

JANUARY 1st, 1791.

ACCEPT, dear JACK, your CLIO's song,
Who, as the seasons roll along,
And years successive move,
With gleeful heart, takes up the quill,
(That certain cure for every ill)
To hail the friends I love.

The subject of all new-years lays
Is still the same; and new-years days
The like reflections give;
Each social neighbour that you see
Exclaims, and shakes your fist with glee;
Long may you happy live.

What tho', dear JACK, it nought affords,
But the same thoughts in different words,
And sentiments quite stale;
Yet sure where truth illumes the song,
And friendship guides the pen along,
You'll not reject the tale.

The laureat bard, who hails the year,
To live at ease, and get good cheer,
In numbers strong and mighty;
Can only wish the king and queen,
What at your board is daily seen,
The true solatia vitæ.

May, dress'd in smiles, each future year,
To you, my boy, and your's appear,
And give you every joy;
May circling seasons as they go,
Drive from your bosom every woe,
Expel each curst alloy.

Full fraught with bliss may every day,
On rapture's pinions fly away,
Until your last be given;
You'll calmly then these realms resign,
" Cast one long lingering look behind,"
And wafted be to heaven.

LINES,

WRITTEN IN

DR. WATSON'S CHEMICAL ESSAYS.

HERE greatness, goodness, taste, and science join,
And radiant truth and elegance combine;
Here mental dignity and courtly ease,
And sterling sense, and brilliant diction please;
Here candour dwells in each improving page,
Nor prejudice is here, nor party-rage;
Here bless'd philanthropy marks every line,
Here each enquiry points the hand divine,
And bids us tread the path, its author trod,
"And look thro' nature, up to nature's God;"
So WATSON did! whose chemic labours prove
His head with wisdom fill'd,...his heart with love.

ON

A MONUMENT,

IN

BECKENHAM CHURCH-YARD.

TO THE MEMORY OF

ANN STONE,

DAUGHTER OF JOHN AND ELIZABETH STONE,

OF WALWORTH IN SURRY.

Who died Dec. 9, 1789, *aged* 23,

THIS MONUMENT,

AN UNAVAILING TOKEN OF AFFLICTION,

IS ERECTED AND INSCRIBED.

NO pompous tribute, where it is not due,
Dear, gentle, lovely ANN! is rear'd for you;
But truth alone, in simple guise imparts
How once thou charm'dst all eyes and won all hearts.

It was, by making virtue thy sole guide,
By elegance and beauty, void of pride;
By constant tenderness, and filial love,
Affection strong as could the bosom move,
Yet softer far than is the meek-eyed dove;
By sweet simplicity, and every grace,
That smooths the temper, or illumes the face.
It was, to exhibit these that thou wast given
On earth awhile to bud...then bloom in heaven.

Reader!...not unimprov'd this spot depart,
But store this precious lesson in thy heart;
Here, to insure thy peace, be good and wise,
And bliss thou shalt secure beyond the skies.

SONNET, XXII.

OF

PETRACH TO LAURA.*

VERSIFIED IN THE

STREIGHTS OF GIBRALTAR.

NOW PHŒBUS down the western sky
His fiery steeds has driven;
And all a dreary gloom doth lie
Beneath the vault of heaven.
But ah! a tenfold gloom my soul pervades,
And grief assails my heart, with far intenser shades.

* From the Italian, supposed to be written after the death of Laura.

To an unfeeling world I moan ;
Wretch that I am, full oft' in vain,
But who will hear the sorrowing mind complain,
Or give a tear to deep affliction's groan !
Sleep flies my bed...rest quits my tearful eye,
And thro' the dreary night, I heave the heart-broke
sigh.

Then bright AURORA cheers the rising day,
But, ah ! to me his beams give no delight,
For whilst o'er nature darts his golden ray,
My soul's bright sun is set in endless might.

EXTEMPORE.

ADDRESS TO MY SEVEN CHILDREN,

WHILE PLAYING ROUND ME.

HAIL lovely groupe! who, guileless, gay,
In sportive gambols round me play;
With joy I see you full of health,
(Accounting this intrinsic wealth;)
And this, the utmost of my prayer,
For you my darlings, life, and care :...
As on to manhood's state you go,
Thus may you live exempt from woe;
May independance of the mind,
Right thinking,...feelings ever kind;
The love of freedom, and of truth,
Alone direct your age and youth.

No mental liars may you be,
But laugh at tricks of gravity;
And may you never aught believe,
Which sacred reason can't conceive;
Which low, unnatural, or odd,
Marks not the conduct of a God!

This granted,...rectitude and peace
Will dwell with you, and never cease;...
This granted,...whether rich, or poor,
Man's highest title you'll ensure!

IMPROMPTU.

WRITTEN AT THE TOP OF THE PAPER,

Called

THE WORLD.

1790.

SO aptly for the title fit,
A work was never seen;
So destitute of truth and wit,
So barren...vulgar...mean.

The World! 'tis like a motley mess
Of nonsense, and of guile;
All puppyistical its dress,
Whipsyllabub its style

O Billy! if thy worthless clan,
Cannot at least write better,
The World will show thy shallow plan,
And be thy cause's satire.

For these defenders, sad to tell,
Are agents only fitted
To publish that thy heart's not well,
Thy head, like their's, half-witted.

A

FAMILIAR EPISTLE

FROM

BRIGHTELMSTONE,

TO A

FRIEND IN LONDON.

1783.

In the stile of the Bath Guide.

AS I promis'd, dear Tom, when we parted in town,
To give you a line whene'er we got down,
I scribble you this in the midst of our hurry,
And take up the pen tho' we're all in a flurry;
For the ladies declare they shall ne'er get to rights,
That their days are disturb'd, and uneasy their nights;
But this will wear off when they're settled, you know,
And then from dear Brighton they'll ne'er want to go:

'Twill be then..." How delightful the Rooms and the Steyne!
" How pleasant this prospect! how charming that scene!"

Will desires remembrance, but swears he won't write
'Till something shall make it worth while to indite;
'Till some droll adventure shall fall in his way,
Some intrigue of note, or good run at play;
'Tis a bore, he declares, to waste pen, ink, and paper,
In scribbling a pack of nonsensical satire;
And wonders that those who have any pretence
To common politeness, decorum, and sense,
Should transmit to their friends such stuff as they do,
Deficient in matter, and harmony too.
You know who he drives at while thus he is preaching,
But I care not a sous for him or his teaching;
Because, forsooth, he is just come from college,
And obtain'd what he thinks an immense stock of knowledge,
He runs upon such humble bards as your friend,
And laughs at the verses he could not have penn'd;
Tho' I frequently tell him, our greatest physicians,
Our greatest of heroes, of bards, politicians,

Our historians so famed, and warriors so great,
Ne'er had in their lives in a college a seat.

PERDITA is here, and the gay FLORIZEL,
That famous of bucks, and that infamous belle;
Here CLARA is figuring away in her best,
With six pretty girls all monstrously drest;
On the Race-hill the creature appear'd in a veil,
But it could not, it would not her vices conceal,
For impudence blaz'd thro' the habit she wore,
And large on her carriage was stamped the .....
From my soul, TOM, I pity the poor girl's condition,
Thus brought up and train'd in the road to perdition!
The races were crouded, there was very good running,
And the knowing-ones queer'd...though so devilishly cunning.

The players succeed pretty well at this place,
Thanks to hair-dressers, prostitutes, lords, and his grace;
In short, it is full of all sorts and degrees,
Too much so your old friend JACK SPATTER to please.
The charges are monstrously high, and the waiters
A parcel of idle, impertinent praters,

Whose behaviour's so cursedly rude and uncivil,
One cannot help wishing them all at the devil.
Their masters are friendly, obliging, polite,
Such HICKS, and such BEST, who always delight
The favour of every friend to requite.

I will write to you soon a very long letter,
At present take this instead of a better.

HORACE,

ODE IX. LIB. I.

SEE how the hills are covered deep with snow,
And naked woods beneath their burthen bow;
The rivers too retard their wonted course,
So great is stormy winter's frigid force!

Be wise, my friend, dissolve the cold intense
With rouzing fires, nor mind a small expense;
With liberal hand put round the smiling bowl,
To drive dull care away, and chear the soul.

The rest with prudence to the gods commit,
For knowledge makes them act as they think fit;
Who, when they've silent laid the struggling wind,
Will grow more generous, unreserv'd, and kind.

To-morrow's good or ill avoid to ask,
T'enjoy the present minute be thy task;
What fickle fortune gives, call perfect gain,
And live devoid of business, fear, and pain.

Nor thou, while youth displays its charms, despise
The potent rays that dart from CÆLIA's eyes,
But, with a sprightly soul for pleasure, prove
The rapturous joys that spring from dance and love.

THE

CURRICLE HORSE AND HIS MASTER.

A FABLE.

EXTRINSIC value governs all,
The stilted fancy they are tall;
And half the world are proud and vain,
Of what themselves did ne'er attain;
In others' feathers dress them fine,
Then cry exulting, "these are mine"!
Such make a great parade and shew,
Of what themselves can never do,
And most unjustly claim the credit
Of others' labour, skill, and merit.

Shall he who boasts a large domain
Of woods and water-falls be vain,
Because perchance they came to him
Through birth, relationship, or whim?

Shall stately domes, or mansions large,
Long rear'd by others' toil and charge,
Create in him assumption, pride,
Who shall in these by chance reside?
Did he to form the marble give,
Or make the breathing canvass live;
Did his ingenious hand bestow
Aught here for service, or for show?

Avaunt then, pride! at any rate,
Be not assuming, proud, elate,
Of things which others ought to claim
Alone the credit, and the fame;
And if you will, and must be vain,
Something to warrant pride attain;
And in the noble, great, and fine,
Ambitious be alone to shine.

On yon South Downs, whose lofty brow
O'erlooks the lovely scenes below;
Where Ouse his winding current leads
Through fertile plains, and woods, and meads;
Where Lewes' hills romantic rise,
And nature every charm supplies;

(Dear natal plains where once some joy
Did every passing hour employ;)
Where the high cliff indignant braves
Old ocean's loud impetuous waves;
Where Brighton's dissipated place
Exhibits folly, vice, and grace.

On these delightful Downs, what time
The sun in splendour rides sublime,
And all creation drest in smiles,
Rewards the peasant for his toils;
When horse 'gainst horse, in rapid race,
Contend the prize, with lightening pace;
When fashion marks the velvet down,
With all the grandeur of the town;
Towering behold the croud among,
As gracefully he plies the thong,
And drawn by coursers full of fire,
That whip, which all the whips admire;
Young TORIMON, whose little heart,
In coach and six, or bankrupt cart;*

* The late Judge Mansfield's name for a gig or buggy.

Exults, and seated on the wheels,
Each petty, paltry, triumph feels.

Descending now from off the hill,
A gradual slope, where calm, and still,
A pause in nature seem'd around,
Save where the distant sheep bells sound,
O'er all the silent scenery stole,
And sooth'd to plaintiveness the soul.

'Twas here, with no intruder by,
While fire, and beauty gem'd his eye;
His favourite gelding turn'd his head,
And thus in modest manner said.

" 'Tis surely strange that reasoning man,
" Made, as he says, on heaven's own plan;
" Should vaunt himself, and make a fuss,
" On deeds and prowess gain'd by us.
" Why lifts, my lord, his empty head,
" Because his racer took the lead;
" Had he, himself, performed the race,
" It would have altered quite the case.

" And why, gay TORIMON, should you,
" Boasting of what you never do,
" Erect your head, and make a fuss,
" Because you travel'd thus and thus;
" And pompously declaim aloud,
" To fashion's yawning, silly croud,
" How many miles within the hour,
" Across this little isle you scower;
" And tasteless mark no beauties round,
" Where, nature's loveliest scenes abound?
" If you, yourself, the carriage drew,
" Great where the act indeed 'tis true;
" But merely to be drawn along,
" And dandle like a child the thong;
" Or cruel strike the noble steed,
" Disgraceful I conceive the deed.

" The eclat thus on reason's plan,
" Rests in the horse, and not the man;
" Does riding then excite your pride,
" Your dog, your monkey, too can ride;
" Thus may your carriage also claim,
" With you an equal share of fame;

" 'Tis true you guide the obedient steed,
" Who, as you will, subservient lead,
" But here the honour's small indeed.
" And the mail-driver beats you hollow,
" While you at humble distance follow.

" Know, too, when gaping crowds are nigh,
" It is not you who draw their eye;
" Walk out yourself in plain array,
" No gaper will molest your way;
" For you have foolishly foregone,
" Those qualities of honour born;
" Which for your own intrinsic worth,
" Had made you fam'd and great on earth;
" And lo! the lowly whom you spatter,
" (As made of far inferior matter,)
" Excel men of your class all round;
" With them is art, is science found;
" Talent and worth with them abide,
" And happiness and sense reside.*"

* " It is not to the most powerful monarch, nor to the most opulent princes, nor to the chief rulers of a nation, that most states owe their splendour, force, and glory. It is private persons, who have

Here ceas'd the intruding gelding's tongue,
Then whirl'd the puppet fast along.

made the most astonishing improvements in the arts, in science, and even in the art of government. Who measured the earth? Who discovered the system of the heavens? Who invented those curious manufactures with which we are clothed? Who has laid open the secrets of natural history? Who has explored the intricacies of chemistry, anatomy, and botany? Certainly private persons; who, in the eye of a wise man, must eclipse the pretenders to greatness, those proud dwarfs, who cherish nothing but their own vanity? In effect, it is not kings, ministers, persons invested with authority, that govern the world. No; it is those men of a superior genius, who cry out to their cotemporaries, with a bold and irresistible voice. Banish those wretched prejudices; pursue more elevated thoughts; despise what thou hast foolishly respected, and respect that which, through ignorance, thou hast despised; profit by thy past follies, and learn better to distinguish the rights of mankind; adopt the ideas that I have set before thee. Thy route is clearly traced; march! and I answer for thy success."

Memoirs of the Year 2500.

See also, on this head, that great work, the Abbé RAYNAL's History of the Indies...book iv. vol. ii.

EPIGRAM.

SAYS DAMON to his sprightly girl,
This prayer to me be given;
To live with thee, angelic fair!...
I ask no more of heaven.

An higher boon, thy SYLVIA craves,
Cries she, with roguish eye;
With DAMON, not content to live,
I wish with him to die!

VERSES

TO

LAURA.

DEAR LAURA! hear the impassion'd tale,
Its sacred lesson let prevail.

Once in fair VENUS's garden grew
A rose, delicious to the view.
Timid and young in fragrance steep'd,
She from her beauteous covering peep'd,
And underneath her leaves conceal'd
A thousand charms to be reveal'd.

PHŒBUS, as up the heaven's he flew,
Saw, and ador'd her blushing hue,
Innumerous glances pierc'd that way,
And shot her with each golden ray.

Her modesty with gentle grace
Gave way, she smil'd, and shew'd her face;
The god's enchanting fires absorb'd,
And blaz'd in radiance full orb'd;
Her hues expanded all became,
Her opening bosom felt the flame;
The wanton zephyrs round her stray'd,
And 'bout her sacred person play'd;
She hail'd, full blown, the laughing hours,
And reign'd a queen among the flowers.

O ye! whose bright refulgent days
Have their AURORA, mark the lays!
Hence learn the prodigies of love,
And all his sweets, his blessings prove;
Smile on his wishes and desires,
And burn with all his sacred fires.

ODE

TO

A NABOB.

See HORACE, 16th Book, Second Ode.

O CLEON! when the wandering tar,
On ocean's bosom's tost afar,
  Amidst the tempest drear;
When clouds obscure the lunar beam,
And not a star around is seen,
  The horrid gloom to chear;
Sailors then curse the troublous seas,
And long for home, and sigh for ease.

The heroes furious in war,
And those who mount the regal car,
  'Midst jewels, gold, and state;
Find grandeur but an empty sound...
For cares the proud and splendid wound,
  And hover round the great;
No real pleasure dwells with these,
But still they groan, and sigh for ease.

That man alone can happy be,
Who is from sordid avarice free,
  Whose frugal board gives health;
Who courts not fashion's tinsel ware,
Uninfluenc'd is by folly's glare,
  Nor damns his peace for wealth;
Whom science, love, and friendship please,
He truly knows the sweets of ease.

Ah! why does short-liv'd, feeble man,
Whose longest period's but a span,
  Aim at so many things;
Still anxious more and more to get,
In distant climates toil and sweat,
  As if time had not wings;
Why plunder lands, and ransack seas,
And cherish care, instead of ease.

Rich Bedford met an early fate,
Old age destroy'd a Franklin late,
  And time to me may send
Superior blessings than your own,
Tho' in your lap profusion's thrown,
  And riches without end.

O may you well appreciate these,
Nor sigh 'midst wealth and state, for ease.

A thousand flocks around you bleat,
Magnificence adorns your seat,
  Your equipages roll;
A snug and rural box is mine,
Some interest with the tuneful nine,
  An independant soul.
Pleas'd with a little,...fond to please,
And blest with sentiment and ease.

IMPROMPTU.

WRITTEN IN

Mrs. BADDELEY's MEMOIRS.

OF titled life, behold the silly state,
And thou wilt say, " how indigent the great;"
Here dissipation, vice, and folly stare;
Here the base heart is fearlessly laid bare;
Here the weak head is open'd to your sight;
Here ignorance, falshood, misery, and spite,
Stalk in your view;...a busy miscreant crowd,
Behold what fools the great; " how little are the proud!"

IMPROMPTU.

ON THE

DEATH OF EDMUND BURKE,

And on

THE EXTRAVAGANT MATTER.

Written and said about him.

OF BURKE, what a parcel of nonsense and clatter!
We'll say, if we can, something nearer the matter:

He was neither so good, nor so bad, as some say;
Nor so wise, nor so foolish, as others pourtray;
But of much less dimensions in every way.
An eloquent man we'll admit he might be,
But this he declares, (and with him we agree,)
"Is neither of talent nor wisdom a test,"
But where these are absent oft' flourishes best.

As to stuff of his fame's being immortal and so,
It proves little acquaintance with matters below,
And how fast men and things to oblivion go.

If his fame should survive, and his memory reign,
He may thank the immortal productions of PAINE;
For as to his writings, as standing alone,
'Tis chance if a hundred years hence they are known.

A

COMMON CHARACTER.

WRITTEN AT

MARTOREL, IN SPAIN.

GAY, who was bred in wisdom's school,
Says, " travelling completes the fool :"
A character the other day,
Threw this reflection in my way ;
The silly thing, all pert and vain,
Was come from home to look at Spain ;
'Tis true he took a peep at France,
And there he pick'd up a new dance ;
And now thro' Italy's gay land,
His dissipated tour had plann'd,

Nought he of men or manners knew,
He came abroad himself to shew;
Just to go thro' the thread-bare rout,
And back return as he came out.
Blame not the youth,...'tis very clear,
His system is consistent here;
For 'twould be silly more to have known
Of other countries than his own.

THE

ELEVENTH ODE

OF

HORACE.

THE FIRST BOOK.

SAY, lov'd PHILANDER! why enquire what end
The potent Gods for me and thee intend?
Why study this to know?
How much more laudable it is to bear
Whate'er shall happen, without anxious fear,
Since all are mortal here below.

Whether great JOVE! will grant one winter more,
To enjoy the blessings of thy worldly store,
Or destines this to be thy last;

Be wise, and boldly rack thy generous wines,
Without delay, nor think on future times,
Nor idly meditate the past.

E'en while we talk, time takes enormous strides,
Then use the present moment while it glides,
Nor think of future hours;
To mortals only doth belong to-day,
Haste then, be good, benevolent, and gay,
And strew its passing course with choicest flowers!

VERSES

WRITTEN EXTEMPORE,

IN THE

CONVENT,

AT

MONSERRATE, in SPAIN.

1785.

WITH solemn step, this awful pile I tread,
Nor with indignant eye around me gaze;
But look with reverence on the sacred dead,
The bloody cross, and ever burning blaze.

No idle prejudice my soul conceives,
Nor horrid bigotry my bosom feels;
I damn not him, who this or that believes,
Nor care before what saint the good man kneels.

Still to the great JEHOVAH, Lord of all!
In different ways the pious heave the sigh;
Regardless of the mode, he hears their call,
And dries, in every land, the tearful eye.

The honest mind in every varied clime,
Alike demands the approving smile of heaven;
Sincere amendment does away the crime,
And mercy to the contrite heart is given.

Is not the God you worship boundless love?
Say then, you sects of every land and name,
How do you dare his dictates disapprove,
And ever seek each other to defame?

Shall you, who boast a Saviour for your head,
A Lord who suffered, died, and bled for all,
Still in your actions contradict his creed,
And, wanting candour...low as devils fall!*

* The author wishes to be understood, that he only uses the word devils figuratively; he has no faith in their existence really; and he believes, that when mankind find that they do not want wars, and taxes, and a religion to underprop the extravagances of power, by extravagances of its own, they will discover that they can do very well without devils.

Hence, ye profane! of whatsoever tribe,
And perish all the systems that you teach!
In vain you talk, if you have priestly pride,
And, wanting charity, in vain you preach.

What are your forms, ye Christians, Pagans, Turks?
If vehicles to serve your God, 'tis well;
He heeds not what they are, if good your works,
Nor cares if psalms you sing, or beads you tell.

Serve then sincere that power who reigns above;
O'er all he holds corrective mercy's rod;
On all, by varying means, pours boundless love,
Then work his will, his goodness haste to prove,...
All shall be pure in heart, and see their God.

SONNET X.

FROM

PETRARCH TO LAURA.

From the Italian.

PLACE me where blazing PHŒBUS burns the earth,
Or snows eternal crush fair nature's birth;
Where milder rays illume this earthly ball,
Or where his influence is not felt at all:
Where fortune surly frowns, or gleeful smiles;
In night or day, in crowds, or trackless wilds;
Where desert rocks their cloud-capt summits rear
'Midst seas immense, or vallies ever drear.
Raise me from earth to yonder skies above,
Or sink me where despairing spirits rove;
Whether life fosters still, or flies this clay,
Where'er the winged soul pursues its way,
Still must I love...and still my tortur'd breast,
Without its LAURA, never can have rest.

EPITAPH

ON

WILLIAM PENN.

WRITTEN OVER HIS GRAVE AT

JORDANS,

IN

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

WILLIAM PENN died May 30, 1681, in the 74th year of his age, and was buried on the 5th of June following, at the above place....The life of this truly honest and noble man is worthy notice; and his great public conduct, his sufferings, trial, imprisonment, prosecutions, and persecutions, prove how general and alike the lot of the friends and supporters of truth and freedom are, and have been in all ages.

EPITAPH

ON

WILLIAM PENN.*

HERE undistinguish'd lies the mortal part
Of him who boasted once the purest heart;
Whom wisdom temper'd, and whom wit refin'd,
Whose head was clear, as spotless was his mind;

WILLIAM PENN* was the son of an Admiral, who had been fortunate enough to be equally distinguished by CROMWELL, and the two STUARTS, who held the reins of government after him. This able seaman, more supple, and more insinuating, then men commonly are in his profession, had made considerable advances to government, in different expeditions in which he had been engaged. The misfortunes of the times had not suffered them to be repaid during his life, and as affairs were not in a better situation at his death, it was proposed to his son, that instead of money he should accept of an eminent territory in America. The love of humanity made him made accept with pleasure the kind

Whose equal laws each principle display'd
That virtue could inspire, and genius aid.
Come, Christians, Pagans, Turks, whate'er your name,
Who plunder others' worlds to raise your fame,
Come, at the shrine of PENN with reverence kneel,
And whilst you read, with deep abasement feel.

patrimony which was ceded to him, almost as a sovereignty; and he determined to make it the abode of virtue, and the asylum of the unfortunate. Here it is that the mind rests with pleasure on modern history, and feels some kind of compensation for the disgust, horror, and melancholy, which the whole of it, but particularly the accounts of the European settlements in America inspires. Hitherto, we have only seen barbarians spreading depopulation before they took possession, and laying every thing waste before they cultivated.

"It is time to observe the seeds of reason, happiness, and humanity, sown, and springing up, amidst the ruin of an hemisphere, which still reeks with the blood of all its people, civilized as well as savage.

"The advantage of that government instituted by PENN, manifested itself in the rapid and continued prosperity of Pennsylvania, which without either wars or conquests, or struggles, or any of those revolutions which attract the eyes of the vulgar, soon became an object fit to excite the admiration of the whole universe. Its neighbours, notwithstanding their savage state, were softened by the sweetness

What your rapacious madness never gain'd,
This wondrous man by peaceful means obtain'd.
Go, if you doubt the assertion quite sincere,
To Pennsylvania go,...and feel it there;
Be like it's founder, wise, discreet, and good,
Nor longer deal in falshood, war, and blood.

---

of its manners; and distant nations, notwithstanding their corruption, paid homage to its virtues. All were delighted to see those heroic days of antiquity realized, which European laws had long taught every one to consider as fabulous.

"If ever despotism, superstition, or war, should plunge Europe again into that state of barbarism, from whence philosophy and the arts have drawn it, the sacred fire will be kept alive in Philadelphia, and come from thence to enlighten the world."

Abbé Raynal's, History of America.

IMPROMPTU.

ON

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

BEING

PROHIBITED SALE.

HAIL, Britain's land! hail, freedom's shore!
Far happier than of old;
For in thy blessed realms no more
The Rights of Man are sold.

STANZAS.

WRITTEN ON THE BEACH,

AT

HAVRE DE GRACE.

and addressed to the

SEA.

ON PARTING WITH

THOMAS PAINE.

On his embarkation for America.

August, 1802.

"A generous friendship no cold medium knows."

POPE'S HOMER.

THUS smooth be thy waves, and thus gentle the breeze,
As thou bearest my PAINE far away;
O! waft him to comfort, and regions of ease,
Each blessing of friendship and freedom to seize,
And bright be his setting sun's ray.

May America hail her preserver and friend,
Whose Common Sense taught her aright,
How liberty through her domains to extend,
The means to acquire each desirable end,
And fill'd her with reason and light.

One champion* of all that is glorious and good,
Will greet thee sincerely I know;
No supporter of craft, of oppression, and blood,
The defender of liberty long he has stood;...
Of tyranny only the foe.

* Extract of a letter from MR. JEFFERSON, president of the United States, to THOMAS PAINE, copied from the original.—"You expressed a wish in your letter to return to America by a national ship. MR. DAWSON, who brings over the treaty, and who will present you this letter, is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland, to receive and accommodate you back, if you can be ready to depart at such a short warning. You will in general find us returned to sentiments worthy of former times; in these it will be your glory to have steadily laboured, and with as much effect as any man living. That you may live long to continue your useful labours, and reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer. Accept the assurance of my high esteem, and affectionate attachment."

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Washington, July, 1802.

Yes! JEFFERSON, well in thy principles school'd,
Will embrace thee with gladness of heart,
Thy value he knows, and is not to be fool'd,
Nor his wisdom and knowledge one moment o'er-
rul'd
By falshood, corruption, and art.

Farewell! and though bitter this parting to me,
I rejoice that from Europe once more
(That Europe unworthy thy talents and thee,)
Thou art hastening to join the happy and free;...
May the breezes blow gently, and smooth be the sea,
That speed thee to liberty's shore.

SONNET.

FINE is the blazon genius flings around,
Whate'er she wills to decorate or write;
Now love and friendship through her verse resound;
Now all that's courteous, gracious, and polite.

Delicate feelings, tenderness, and truth,
Each scene pathetic garnishes her line;
All that can fascinate, from age to youth,
All that's impressive, tender, great, and fine.

And this is well, if correspondent life
The bard can boast; if good and true he be;
An enemy to faction, force, and strife,
Polite and courteous, liberal, just, and free.

For these, with common talents, far outweigh
All genius finely sings, or talkers finely say.

PSALM XV.

VERSIFIED

ON THE

ATLANTIC OCEAN.

October, 1785.

SAY, gracious God! and aid my song,
To whom salvation does belong;
To whom thy promises are given,
And who the man thou'lt raise to heaven?

'Tis he whose very thought and deed
From virtue's precepts ne'er recede;
Whose generous tongue could ne'er impart
The thing that was not in his heart:

Who ne'er put wicked scandal round,
Nor dar'd his neighbour's fame to wound;
Who ne'er believ'd what malice said,
Or listen'd when the lie was spread:

Who vice rejects with all her state,
With whom the good are only great;
Who to his breast will fondly bear
The child of worth, tho' rags he wear:

Who to his plighted vows and trust
Is ever obstinately just;
Altho' the promise that he makes,
His last remaining pittance takes:

Whose soul could ne'er a farthing claim,
That justice did not bid him name;
Who ne'er the guiltless could destroy,
Or look on other's ills with joy.

This man, when earth's foundation shakes,
When universal nature quakes,
Shall mount on rapture's wings away
To regions of eternal day!

A

BACCHANALIAN SONG.

WRITTEN FOR

MR. DARLEY.

PUSH the bottle, let's be merry,
Here's the port, and there's the sherry;
BACCHUS now with rosy smiles,
Says he'll bless our jocund toils.

Wine the sprightly wit inspires,
Fills the mind with gay desires;
Our best of pleasure does improve,
And elevates the joys of love.

Philosophy, a friend to wine,
Does by its aid still brighter shine;
Ev'n aged CATO's virtuous soul
Was mended by the flowing bowl.

Wine chears the wretched, charms the wise,
And makes ev'n slaves their lords despise;
When fill'd with BACCHUS nought we fear,
But tip old father care the sneer.

Thus with mirth and humour gay,
We'll pass the nightly hours away;
And when the sun begins his race,
The briny drunkard we'll outface.

TO

MRS. ——.

(A CHARMING PAINTER,)

AT

BRIGHTHELMSTONE.

After some disagreement.

SAY, while you rove the sea's delightful side,
And mark the extended prospect open wide;
While nature's charms, resistless, press the sight,
And all around conspire to give delight;
Say, while your eyes, which too much harm have done,
Oe'r each expanded beauty rapturous run;
Will 'midst the scene no thoughts delighted dwell
On him who fondly sees you all excel?
Who marks with joy each elegance combin'd
Of graceful mein and energy of mind?

O! Clara, let each trivial difference cease,
And to the wounded heart again speak peace;
Let the bright sea, your beauties while it laves,
Drown every disagreement in its waves;
So shall my gladden'd heart with joy behold
Wide to the wondring world your worth unfold;
So may your name through time expanded fly,
And your fine tints boast immortality;
So may success on all your merits wait,
And, while you rise to view, in science great,
Though thousands hail you in your bright career,
None can be warmer, no one more sincere,
In every plaudit, bounding from the heart,
Than he, who dictates this, devoid of art.

THE VILLAGE BALL,

WRITTEN AT

THE ROCKS,

1782.

INSCRIBED TO BELINDA.

LET other bards, in labour'd song,
Describe with pomp the courtly throng,
  Where all the great and gay,
Where titled fools in splendour shine,
And nymphs by fashion made divine,
  Pass the dull hours away.

Where none dare mingle in the dance,
None in the mazy sport advance,
  But those who rank and state;
To whom blind chance much wealth has given,
The worst of beings under heaven,
  Vulgarly call'd the great.

Let other bards such throngs describe,
I sing a sweet, an humble tribe,
  Who shone at Uckfield ball;
Where sociability and ease,
The power to charm, the will to please,
  Was seen in one and all.

Where nymphs appeared without the aid
Of idle show and vain parade
  To make their beauties shine;
Whom nature blest with every grace,
The faultless form, the faultless face,
  The gesture all divine.

Amanda there, with artless mien,
Towering above the rest was seen,
  In dignity and ease;
There sweet Lavinia greatly shone,
With air and manner all her own,
  Who never fails to please.

There Laura too, in lovely state,
On whom the graces ever wait,
  Attractive charm'd the sight;

And JULIA, full of fire and wit,
To whom ev'n CELIA must submit,
Though form'd to give delight.

These lovely nymphs, and crouds beside,
The boast of Sussex, and her pride,
At Uckfield ball appear'd;
Each with her kind complaisance charm'd,
Each with her grace and beauty warm'd,
And the glad evening chear'd.

Go on, determin'd to be gay,
Unheedful what the proud may say,
The social plan pursue;
Then shall the bard again rehearse
The Uckfield ball; again his verse
Sing, beauteous maids, of you.

PETRACH TO LAURA.

Written upon a spot she frequently visited.

FROM THE ITALIAN.

ON this sweet bank, beneath these shades,
I sing of thee, my fair;
Of LAURA! who my heart pervades,
And ever liveth there.

Delicious spot!...this murmuring stream,
Soft echoes to my sighs;
And every zephyr to my theme,
With tenderness replies.

I reverence all the objects round,
My love sick soul they melt;
In all is LAURA's image found,
In all, her presence felt.

THE

JUSTICE.

WRITTEN FOR RECITATION.

"The caps let whosoever wear,
"If they but fit, 'tis all I care."

NOT such as the immortal SHAKSPEARE drew,
Is seen the justice we expose to view;
No fair round belly of good capon full,
With beard of formal shape, and gravely dull;
No saws of wisdom mark the man I draw,
He barely knows a hatchet from a saw.

We sing a justice of the country cut,
With self approving air, and martial strut;
A fox-hunter, a country squire, and beau,
Buckskin'd and booted from the chin to toe;
A bully 'midst his comrades o'er the bowl,
And 'mongst men of no mind y'clipt a soul;
Loud and dogmatic at the village inn,
A compound of coxcomitry and sin;

Low bending, cringing, should my lord be near,
But overbearing when the clowns appear;
To wealth obsequious, to merit blind,
Averse from all the good of all mankind;
Still making property the test of all,
He, as men have it, dubs them great or small.

His judgment, as a justice now we'll say,
And tell a tale that happen'd t'other day...
A rogue who had some linsey-woolsey got,
Stole it, t'was said...however he said not...
Was brought before this knowing magistrate,
Who heard the parties with prodigious state,
Then to his books for satisfaction ran,
And thus his wiseacre harangue began.

"If it had been a horse, a sheep, or hog,
"For stealing, here you had brought the knavish dog;
"Or any thing almost that you could mention,
"I would commit him as was my intention;
"But there's no act at all that I can find,
"For stealing stuff of linsey-woolsey kind;
"So I the culprit must of course discharge,
"Though pity 'tis, such knaves should be at large."

So saying, with a supercilious air
He rose, and left the majesterial chair.

This picture finished, much too like and true,
Another justice we'll uphold to view;
One who deserves the name, whose equal soul
No affluence can seduce, nor fears controul;
Who labours only for the public weal,
Whose head has talent, and whose heart can feel;
Whose views to one great end directed see;
To make his fellows happy, wise, and free;
The state's true honour anxiously to plan,
And bear that best of titles, honest man!
Above all bribes, above the rich man's sway,
What reason dictates he'll alone obey,
To virtue only and her friends a friend,
His motives ever to one object tend,
The public peace, and private good to blend.

SONNET
TO
MY LITTLE GIRL.
1792.

WRITTEN AT CALAIS,
ON
Being pursued by cruel and unjust prosecution and persecution.

FAREWELL, sweet babe! and may'st thou never know,
Like me, the pressure of exceeding woe.
Some griefs (for they are human nature's right,)
On life's eventful stage will be thy lot;
Some generous cares to clear thy mental sight,
Some pains in happiest hours perhaps begot;
But may'st thou ne'er be, like thy father, driven
From a lov'd partner, family, and home;
Snatch'd from each heart-felt bliss, domestic heaven!
From native shores, and all that's valued roam.
O may bad governments, the source of human woe,
Ere thou becom'st mature, receive their deadly blow,
Then mankind's greatest curse thou ne'er wilt know.

VERSES
ON
SANDY BALLS,
NEAR
FORDINGBRIDGE.
1788.

Respectfully inscribed to
MRS. NEAVE.

IF nature's charms have charms for thee,
Stop, and loiter here with me;
Mark the lovely scene below,
Where a thousand beauties glow;
Mark, where Avon's winding wave,
Woods, and meads, and villas lave;...
Not fairer scenes that Avon knew,
Which round immortal SHAKSPEARE grew;
Not Grongar hill a view can give,
More fit in poesy to live.

Tho' Dyer sweeter things could say,
Than he who forms this humble lay;
Yet will he not the song disclaim,
And Sandy Balls shall live in fame.

Sweet spot! while now the god of day
Illumes yon hills with fainter ray,
And gives to Breamore's lovely wood,
And gives to Avon's circling flood,
A shade serene of placid hue,
Enriching more the costly view;

Neat below the village see,
Sacred to society!
Here a social group are seen,
And friendship is their hallow'd queen;
Here secluded from all cares,
But tender hopes, and virtuous tears,
(Cares so like our joys you know,
They make up half our bliss below)
They live, bright "reason's feast" to prove,
And that "flow of soul" they love.

Above the decent church, behold
The hill of Bower rises bold;

And to the right each varied grace
Of nature decks the lovely place;
Where, in COOTE's fair mansion meet
Nature and art,...assemblage sweet.

Now o'er yon downs of sable hue,
The towering firs adorn the view;
And Gallows hills' aspiring brow,
Delights the ravish'd gazer now.

Beneath the extended woods survey,
And lawns which every grace display,
The church half hid,...the lake below,
Where sentiment and science glow;
There, classic taste, and rural, meet,
And nature, made by art, more sweet,...
Such are the charms of HULSE's seat.

Adown the stream, in rustic pride,
Sweet Bickton mill stands o'er the tide;
Delightful spot! embosom'd fair,
Its master's darling joy and care;
Its master honest, frank, and kind,
Of smiling face, and liberal mind.

Now, if such charms have charms for thee,
Stop, and loiter here with me;
Then will thine enraptur'd eye,
Where my description fails, supply;
And thou will catch the extatic charm,
And harmony thy bosom warm;
Till contemplation stretch her course,
To that ador'd exhaustless source,
Whence all nature's beauties rise,
In ocean, earth, and boundless skies;
And whence the mind the power receives,
To relish the delights she gives.

ODE,

RECITED AFTER DINNER,

ON

MR. HENSHAW'S,

COMING OF AGE.

WRITTEN WHEN VERY YOUNG.

WITH radiant beams the sun arose,
On this auspicious day,
While the tired bard in sweet repose,
Slept the gay hours away.

Not unimproved...for to his view,
A friendly vision came,
Shook from his curls the morning dew,
And thus announced his name.

FRIENDSHIP I am...a being kind,
Thou know'st me well I ween,
The kind solacer of the mind,
And banisher of spleen.

This day thy HENSHAW gains that age,
When manhood claims his right,
When all the business of life's stage,
Rush full upon his sight.

Rise, hail the morn! and hail the day!
Attune to joy the lyre,
Bid BACCHUS all his charms display.
And VENUS all her fire.

Friendship well pleased shall crown the eve,
When round the bowl you meet,...
Well chastised mirth that can't deceive,
With social joy replete.

Rise, mark my words, thou know'st me well,
Here vanished from my sight,
Twice waved his hand and bade farewell,
The venerable spright.

With joy I followed all he said,
And now my HENSHAW hear,
What's from an honest heart convey'd,
An heart to friendship dear.

May this revolving day still find,
You free from every care,
Possessing health, wealth, peace of mind,...
This is your CLIO's prayer.

And may the social circle here,
An equal blessing share,
Pass life's rough road without a tear,
Quit it, without a care.

Fill up the glass, with liberal hand,
To HENSHAW fill it up,
Friendship the bumper does demand,
And sanctify the cup.

IMPROMPTU.

ON THE

DUKE OF BEDFORD'S MOTION

IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

FOR

THE DISMISSAL OF MINISTERS.

1795.

WHEN BEDFORD brings his motion forth,
And says the ministry must go,
Because they are the men on earth,
Quite form'd to work the nation's woe :

When GRENVILLE in reply declares
That opposition men wont do
To guide the helm of state affairs ;
By heaven ! they both of them speak true.

VERSES,

SENT

TO A LADY,

WITH

A PRESENT OF A LOCKET.

WHEN late o'er Hampshire's glowing scenes I rov'd,
And mark'd their various charms with eager eye,
Though nature's beauties cluster'd as I mov'd,
And all was harmony, earth, air, and sky;

Yet had not JANE! thy fascinating face,
Thy VENUS form, and captivating air,
Met my rapt gaze, with each attractive grace,
And, bade me hail thee, fairest of the fair;

Ev'n Hampshire's glowing scenes had met my view,
With little interest, had not lovely JANE!
A magic influence all around her threw,
And given a zest to each enchanting scene.

Thus, dearest girl! while separated wide,
I breathe my admiration of thy worth,
And, should between us roll the Atlantic tide,
Or, horrid thought! disjoin us half the earth;

Still would my ardent fancy dwell on thee,
And from my breast escape the anxious sigh,
That thou may'st live from every trouble free,
And after life's enjoyment...happy die.

Long may the trifle which this tribute bears,
Be worn by lovely JANE, for many a day;
So shall the giver, while her chains he wears,
In absence have one charm to make him gay.

EPIGRAM.

LORD STUPID who long in the senate had sat,
And always attended to hear others prate,
Tho' ne'er in that place he had utter'd a word,
But the long-winded speeches most patiently heard;
T'other day when the high priest of babbling was ranting
Of jacobins, atheists, and such silly canting,
Hear! hear! cries a pensioner sitting just by,...
I ne'er do aught else! was his lordship's reply.

IMPROMPTU.

ON

READING SOME COARSE AND INDELICATE

VERSES,

Said to be written by a Lady.

THAT any lady so should write,
Should so unblushingly indite,
  Offends and hurts us too:
Ev'n men, indignant, read the line;
How then must feel that sex divine,...
  Sure, CHARLOTTE, 'tis not you!

'Tis by degrees we ever find
The elegant and tender mind
  Loses its dearest charms;
And cruel they who would deform
Its heavenly make, by sap or storm,
  And fill it full of harms.

Hail, DELICACY! sky-born maid!
The muse who courts not thy sweet aid
  Shall hardly be forgiven:
Forsaking thee, true joys we miss,
Spoil even our terrestrial bliss,
  And lose the way to heaven.

SONNET.

O Ye ambitious! when you lose your state;
Ye avaricious! when you lose your store,
Talk not of dismal fortune, cruel fate,
Nor your fallen splendor bitterly deplore.

Ye rich and costly, fond of show and noise,
Of silly titles, fashion, folly, glare;
And ye who hoard, and know no other joys
Than, by your affluence, to make fools stare.

When these ye lose, or, what is just the same,
Find that no real blessings they bestow;
Then cry not out 'gainst fate, nor fortune blame,
Nor wiles, nor wars, nor adverse winds that blow.

Rather cry out against those rocks and shelves,
Your riches, splendor, whence you lost yourselves

SONNET XVII.

PETRARCH TO LAURA.

Written

GOING DOWN THE PO.

'TIS true, impetuous Po! thy rapid waves
My body bear away from her I love;
But my fond spirit all thy power braves,
And towards its LAURA distant far doth rove

Yes, my fond spirit thro' yon æther flies,
Nor winds nor waves its fervent course can stay;
Thy flood it quickly leaves, and mounts the skies,
And shapes to Avignon and love its way.

Proud stream! you eastward roll the sun to meet,
But leave behind a glory far more bright;
For westward lies my LAURA's lov'd retreat,
And thy fierce torrent bears me from the sight.

In vain!...for still my ardent spirit roves
To LAURA, love, and Avignon's dear groves.

TO

LAURA,

RETURNING FROM BATHING.

ISLE OF WIGHT,

Sep. 1800.

HOW sweet is the opening rose,
And brilliant the stars of the sky !
Yet thy beauties are greater than those,
More sparkling thy love winning eye.

When VENUS arose from the sea,
Her person all gemm'd with the brine,
She was not so lovely as thee,
Nor her beauties so blazing as thine.

Had the goddess my LAURA then seen,
She'd have plung'd in the ocean again,
With envy survey'd her bright mein,
And never more rose from the main....

EPITAPH

ON

ALGERNON SYDNEY,

WHO WAS

EXECUTED ON TOWER-HILL,

1683.

Written at the family vault at Penshurst, where his remains were deposited.

HERE lies the abettor of a god-like cause,
Whose name shall outlive bad men and their laws;
And long his memory 'mongst the good shall last,
When despots are no more, and tyrant times are past.

Pause! reader, o'er lamented SYDNEY's bier,
On worth and innocence bestow the tear;
And while down thine indignant cheek it flows,
Swear deep revenge on his and virtue's foes;

Swear to destroy that gang, whoe'er they be,
Who dare infringe thy birth-right to be free;
Who violate man's rights, and heaven's laws,
Retire!...and swear destruction to their cause.

NOTE.

Lord C. J. JEFFRIES; (after passing sentence,)

"I pray God to work in you a temper fit to go into the other world, for I see you are not fit for this."

COL. SIDNEY—"My lord! feel my pulse (holding out his hand) and see if I am disordered, I bless God I never was better in temper than I am now."

To a more interesting and valuable work than the life, trial, and writings of this great and good man, the reader cannot be referred.

EPIGRAM.

WILL's heart is spotless, all the placemen cry,
And the world knows that placemen never lie.
Spotless indeed it is...alas! alack!
Because all o'er, inside and out, 'tis black!

SONNET III.

OF

PETRARCH.*

BANISHED from earth was virtue long ago,
By foul corruption, tyranny, and pride;
And sloth, intemperance, vanity, and woe,
Baneful, among the sons of men reside.

Intent on wealth,...on sordid gain alone,
Each light celestial's driven far away;
The world will only error, falshood, own,
And mock the poet and his heavenly lay.

* To an illustrious lady, who wrote a sonnet to PETRARCH, to consult him if she should follow her passion for poetry, in spite of the raillery of her acquaintance.

Let shame and want philosophy await,
The sordid and ignoble crowd exclaim,
We seek alone for riches, rank, and state,
And hate the sons of science, truth, and fame.

So 'tis fair friend;...yet still the path pursue
Which leads to happiness and glory too.

EPITAPH.

STRANGER or friend, who views this hallow'd spot,
Where'er thy residence...whate'er thy lot,
Ah! drop, in sorrow's name, one pitying tear,
And learn this lesson over CORFIELD's bier,
That health, youth, riches, stop not death's hard hand,
Nor aught revoke the Almighty's dread command.
Him who sleeps here, love, youth, and plenty blest,
The good esteem'd him, and the wise carest;
Fortune propitious led along his hours,
And joy had cull'd for him the choicest flowers;
When lo! that day, which made the nymph his own,
To whom his vows of love and truth were sworn,
Th' all conquering tyrant sudden stopp'd his breath,
And clos'd his brightest prospects all...in death.
Reader, attend, learn where true wisdom lies,
" All build too low who build beneath the skies."

EXTEMPORE.

ON THE

EDITOR OF A NEWSPAPER,

ANNOUNCING TO THE PUBLIC HIS REMOVAL FROM

THE LITTLE OLD HOUSE,

TO THE

GREAT WHITE HOUSE.

FROM little shed to great white house,
Once crept a little stupid mouse;
And vainly fancy'd that himself
Grew bigger, as he hopp'd each shelf.
A knowing mouse, who mark'd his whim,
Thus spoke the fool...and laugh'd at him:
" Whether in valley, or on hill,
" Pigmies, my boy, are pigmies still!"

EXTEMPORE.

EPIGRAM,

Upon seeing

"WISDOM, FROM LONDON,"

In large characters, over the door of a hair dresser at

BRIGHTON.

WISDOM from London!...that I ween,
Amazing is, cry'd Ned;
From whence the goddess ne'er has been,
She never can have fled.

That's true, his witty friend reply'd,
But even if she there,
'Midst folly, riot, vice, and pride,
Had deign'd her throne to rear:

Yet if for once she did intend,
To journey from her home;...
She far from hence her course would bend,
Nor near Brightelmstone roam.

EPITAPH

ON

LORD GEORGE GORDON.

REMOV'D from Newgate's jail, of graves the worst,
For near six years by close confinement curst,*
Here, in that grave, which liberty bestows,
Ends GORDON's persecution and his woes,

I give thee joy! from ills and bondage free,
And wish mankind were all as good as thee:
For, though ill-fated, slander'd, and revil'd,
Thy heart was honest, and thy manners mild.

* For speaking of the last queen of France.

Written in

THE TITLE PAGE OF THE WORKS OF LORD BOLINGBROKE.

HOW undertitled BOLINGBROKE appears,
Especially in these degenerate years,
When any things are lords!...Oh how unfit,
That paltry title for so great a wit.

Hail, BOLINGBROKE! thy wondrous learned mind,
Thy judgment, reason, intellect refin'd;
Thy boundless knowledge, and thy stores of sense,
(And who like thee did knowledge e'er dispense)
Amaze, convince us, and arouse the soul
To virtue's, truth's, and reason's sole controul.

To designate thee equal to thy worth,
O BOLINGBROKE! no title's left on earth.
A lord, indeed!...a god we'd better name thee,
For such thy great immortal works proclaim thee.

EPIGRAM,

ON A

KNOWN BAD AND INFAMOUS

CHARACTER,

Being highly extolled in a poem entitled

A FAIRY TALE.

INTEGRITY and CANTWELL's name,
Indeed first made us stare;
And very strange appear'd that strain
Which join'd the ne'er join'd pair.

For CANTWELL's various honest ways,
To all was wondrous matter;
But that whate'er this poet says,
Praise undeserv'd is satire.

Howe'er the title of his verse,
To save his soul can't fail;
No CANTWELL's virtues he'll rehearse,
But in a fairy tale.

EXTEMPORE.

Upon seeing

THE WONDERFULLY AND BEAUTIFULLY

WROUGHT-STEEL CHAIR,

OF THE

EMPEROR RODOLPHUS II. OF GERMANY,

AT

LORD RADNOR's,

AT

LONGFORD CASTLE.

THAT this was made by human hands,
Far more belief than mine demands;
This is the truth, and doubt it none can,
RODOLPHUS had the chair of VULCAN.

This chair is made of wrought steel, and is so exquisite a piece of work, and so great a curiosity, that it is thought worth while to direct the reader's attention to it.—It was made for the emperor

RODOLPHUS the second, of Germany, and is now in the possession of the earl of RADNOR, at Longford-castle, Wiltshire.

This chair was a present from the city of Augsburgh, to the emperor RODOLPHUS the second, about the year 1575.

The artist's name was THOMAS RUKES.—The large compartment at the back of it, represents NEBUCHADNEZZAR asleep, and the statute about which he dreamed, is standing before him; and just adjoining, is a representation of the king on his throne, and DANIEL before him explaining the dream.

The wrought work on the chair, is well known to be descriptive of the four great monarchies of the world, viz. The Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman.

The head of the Roman empire, the emperors of Germany affect to be, and in compliment to RODOLPHUS, the history is reduced, (by a representation of the several compartments, of which there are more than 130 of select, and remarkable events, immediately connected with it) from the destruction of the city of Troy, to the time of the then emperor himself.

This chair was thirty years in making, and is said to have cost 40,000l.

The four figures missing at the bottom of the chair, some imagine were never there, and that it was originally in this respect incompleat;—but this does not seem probable, and can be only conjecture.

This chair was the property of the celebrated count TESSIN, who was ambassador from the court of Sweden to the English court.—Of his son, GUSTAVUS BRAEDER, ESQ. bought it for 1800 guineas; who sold it to the present earl of RADNOR for 600 guineas.

A

MORNING HYMN.

WRITTEN AT

SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE.

" Barbarity and caprice, however nominally disguised, we may universally observe to form the ruling character of the deity in popular religions.—And as the good, the great, the sublime, the ravishing are found eminently in the genuine principles of theism, it may be expected from the analogy of nature, that the base, the absurd, the mean, the terrifying, will be discovered equally in religious fictions and chimeras."

DAVID HUME.

A MORNING HYMN.

WRITTEN AT

SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE.

GOD of my life! now aid the muse
To sing thy wondrous power,
Thou, at whose will the morn returns,
And each revolving hour.

Thou, who can'st deal around thee storms,
And lay whole countries waste;
Proud tyrants crush and nations shake,
At thy tremendous blast.

Thine, also, is the calmer breeze,
As well as storms to wield;
Thou dart'st the sun's creative rays,
And cloath'st the verdant field.

'Tis thou o'er yonder lofty hill
Direct'st that orb to shine;
Unbarring now the gates of light,
In lustre all divine.

'Tis now the feather'd tribe awake,
With grateful hearts they rise,
And in melodious accents praise
The ruler of the skies,

Now honest swains their cots forsake,
To labour in the fields;
Some ply with careful hand the rake,
Some reap what nature yields.

Thus these their hours spend in toil,
As happy full as they,
Whom dissipation leads to pass
In luxury the day.

Greatly indeed they miss the truth,
Who envy wealth and state;...
Can these give health, the bloom of youth,
Or make man truly great?

For thou, good GOD! supremely kind,
  Profusely shower'st around
Thy equal gifts to all mankind,
  The monarch and the clown.

Thy goodness ever meets our view,
  'Tis through all nature seen;
Thou bid'st the shades of night withdraw,
  And morning comes serene.

Thou speak'st, and glorious day is ours,
  The gates of morn unfold;
And yonder eastern clouds are deck'd
  In bright refulgent gold.

Thy power form'd this wondrous world;
  At thy tremendous nod,
All nature out of chaos broke,
  And own'd its potent God.

Then wild confusion heard thy voice,
  Beauty and order came;...
Then countless systems rush'd to light,
  And this all glorious frame.

Where'er we gaze, almighty God !
We 're bound thy name to praise;
And thy transcendent works must be
The subject of our lays.

The universe thy temple is,
Creation is thy book;
We need not deal in mysteries,
We need no farther look.

In characters sublime and grand
Thy power is here display'd;
Here thou'rt reveal'd to every land,
In majesty array'd.

The soul amended reads this work;
Here, legible alone
To each correct and simple heart,
Thy characters are known.

No vulgar tricks, no priestly cant,
Real religion needs;
The God of nature libell'd is
By low degrading creeds.

Best worship'd HE in scenes like this,
Best serv'd by conduct clear;
By forwarding of all the bliss,
And doing good whilst here.

IMPROMPTU.

WRITTEN ON BOARD

THE ISIS MAN OF WAR,

While laying off

THE SOUTH FORELAND,

1795,

When immense sums were sending to the Emperor of Germany, &c. &c.

A CIT lately rambling round Margate's fair coast,
Observing suspended three balls on a post,*
Ask'd a rogue of a wag in a serious way,
What meant on the Foreland this lofty display.
" To the Continent, sir, as a signal 'tis meant,
" And implies, as at pawn-shops...here money is lent."

* One of the telegraphs to announce when the enemies privateers are out.

EPITAPH,
ON
MISS POOLE,
OF
CROYDON.

PASS not this sacred spot, with heedless tread,
But muse, and learn instruction from the dead.
Could brilliant genius, dear engaging youth,
The sweetest manners, and the strictest truth;

The nicest honour,...friendship most refin'd,
Each grace of feature, and each charm of mind;
Could these, have e'er the darts of death defied,
Thousands had never wept,...fair POOLE had never died.

Learn hence to prize with caution all below,
Nor love that earth you must so soon forego;
Tread virtue's paths, towards heaven direct your eyes,
Nor think ought worth your care beneath the skies.

EPITAPH.

LOCK'D in each other's arms, here quiet lie
The worthiest creatures ever doom'd to die:
Of women best and loveliest was she;...
Of men the most unfortunate was he.
Their lives exhibited a scene of woe,
Their hearts, a purity scarce known below;
Their loves obedient to great nature were,
Their conduct govern'd by a world severe;
Their union barr'd on earth, to heaven they flew,
And ratified it there where first it grew.

EPIGRAM.

AN itinerant manager very well known,
To an actor of merit thus spoke with a frown :
" Your salary, sir, far this lady's exceeds,
" Say whence then your different appearance proceeds;
" She always is elegant, cleanly, and splendid,
" While you're dirty, in rags, or with cloaths vilely
mended."
" The reason is plain, since your honour compels,"
" I buy, sir, the article that lady sells."

PROLOGUE

TO THE

GRECIAN DAUGHTER,

Written in a hurry,

FOR A COMPANY OF PLAYERS,

AT

BRIGHTON,

Who performed in a temporary theatre.

1781.

BEFORE the play begins, as is the way,
I venture forth a word or two to say;
To crave indulgence of this courteous throng,
Assembled thus to hear their poet's song;
To beg a kind attention you will give,
Remembering by your favour 'tis we live;
Extend then your indulgence to the player,
And frankly we will tell you how things are.

Confin'd to this small spot, and scenes like these,
We lose in part the pleasing power to please;
Depriv'd of such advantages...we sue
To find a substitute for these in you.

O let your candour for these make amends,
We brave all evils....if you are our friends.

To night the hero's wrongs demand your care,
The daughter's woes,...the pious pitying tear;
Virtue with all her graces charms the sight,
And firm unshaken love, the gods' delight!
Receives at last, its just, its true reward,
For constant love still merits heaven's regard.

Ye sons of ALBION to these scenes attend,
Join in one cause, and act to one fair end,
And whilst you see how dire disorders rise,
Be cautious, steady, and at length be wise.
Let curst corruption in your empire cease,
And all sides league in friendship, and in peace.

SONNET.

TO

MISS HARRIET RUSSELL,

On hearing that she wept over the fate of certain persecuted, prosecuted, and suffering individuals.

WHILE wandering in a land where vice prevails,
And impious men and folly's sons bear sway;
Where error bawls, and superstition's tales
Are told unblushing in the face of day;

'Tis joy indeed, to hear that there are souls,
Warm, energetic, to each feeling true;
Where sterling principle alone controuls,
And love and tenderness the cheeks bedew.

'Tis joy to hear that there are hearts that mourn,
A SYDNEY's fate, and freedom's children left
To bad men's mercy and the wicked's scorn;
Of all that's dear by tyranny bereft.

'Tis joy to know that HARRIET's breast bestows
The sigh for such...for such her sorrow flows.

LINES

TO

A FRIEND,

THE LAST DAY OF THE YEAR,

1792.

" Thou wilt hear it whispered around thee,—these things cannot be done;—and even if they could they are innovations.—Innovations let them be.—But all the discoveries that have been made in the arts and sciences, have they not been equally so?—Is then the art of good government the only one that cannot be improved?—Or are we to reckon as innovations the general assembly of a great nation,—the restoration of primitive liberty, and the respectable exertion of the first acts of natural justice."

Conclusion of the Abbé Raynal's advice to Louis the XVI. *on his coming to the throne—History of the Indies*, Vol. II. Book IV.

LINES

TO

A FRIEND,

THE LAST DAY OF THE YEAR,

1792.

BETTER times and better cheer,
More to hope and less to fear;
Such may bring the coming year.
May France its grand republic try,
And ev'n America's outvie;
May men throughout the world agree,
To live from tyrant systems free.
May England to herself be just,
Nor to associations trust;
Guard well her press,...each bliss she knows
From full and free discussion flows;...
And listening to the people's claim,
Secure her happiness and fame.

Great reforms in church and state,
The wisest, best, and bravest wait.
These reforms adopted, see
Briton's happy, firm, and free.
Rectitude of conduct too,
Each individual must pursue;
And though it be a bitter cup,
All on conviction must give up;
And, where bright truth and reason lead,
Regardless of events proceed;
So shall spies, and creatures vile,
Cease to ruin England's Isle;
So the wealthy,...titled,...rude,
So ev'n BURKE's "swinish multitude"
Shall comforts have, they never knew,
For these from equal rights accrue:
So shall no lazy drones be found,
To rob the industrious, or their peace to wound,
But joy and plenty through the land abound:

TOO COMMON

A CHARACTER.

Written up the Mediterranean.

1785.

" As the rich and vulgar feel that they themselves
" would be nothing without money, they conceive
" nothing above money.

MERCIER.

MILE-END has got one general rule
To tell the wise man from the fool;
But whilst he thus does judgment pass,
Completely proves himself an ass.
Thus as of characters you talk,
Whate'er in life may be their walk;
However various their merit,
Or great the virtues they inherit,

What though the genius you toast
A head and heart like Lofft can boast,
And fortune too has kindly granted,
All honesty, and honour wanted;...
He'll ask with supercilious air,
And envious cent-per-centish stare,
" How many thousands he has got,
" And whether he is rich or not."
He hears with joy the wish'd reply,
(And pleasure sparkles in his eye,)
" That he some thousands must amass,
" Ere he can Mile-End's wealth surpass;"
Thus he retorts and fills his glass.

" Of him what judgment form you please,
" But I can buy him up with ease."

This is poor Mile-End's test of spirit,
And this the way he judges merit....

FAMILIAR BILLET.

TO THE

HONOURABLE MRS. B——.

In answer to an invitation to dinner,

ON

NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1794.

MADAM!
I hail you on this new-year's day,
And thus I most sincerely pray,
May all your moments pass away,
Or sweetly grave, or wisely gay;
And ere dear ma'am! from earth you stray,
May tyranny no more bear sway,
But freedom all her charms display....

May law and lawyers, with dismay,
Retire before truth's glorious ray,
And men no longer be their prey,
But liberty to all convey
Her precious equal rights...O may
The few no more the many slay!
But fight themselves in each affray;
And may the poor no more purvey,
And sweat and toil, like horse in dray,
For the unworthy, rich, and gay,
For placemen vile, and such as they.

Pardon this little rough essay,
Nor slight the heart dictated lay,
Nor to informers me betray,
Who dares thus freely to inveigh,
And error's systems to belay;
I wish to see them done away,
And men to having more say nay.

May truth man's misery forelay,
And all the world her plans obey,
At grave imposter's then we'll neigh,
And none our happiness gainsay.

So shall we either sing, or say,
What reason warrants to display,
And all be wise, and good, and gay.

Your summons I'll not disobey,
But at your table chearful play,
A knife and fork, this new-year's day,
And to your wine respects I'll pay;
Then furthermore my thoughts convey,
Without reserve, without dismay,
And those we love and far away,
We'll bumper in your bright tokay.
And thus I close my roundelay,
Wishing you blest in every way!

Yours ever,

ANTI-POPINJAY.

IMPROMPTU.

SENT

With a bouquet of artificial flowers

TO

MRS. BADDELEY.

JUST BEFORE HER PERFORMING

OPHELIA.

ON that sweet breast! where thousand charms combine,
OPHELIA! let these love-sent flowers recline;
Their envied station with delight I'll trace,
And sighing say, Oh! could I take their place.

May that dear bosom beat to joy alone,
There, may the dancing loves erect their throne;
There, may the blue-eyed pleasures ever dwell,
There, each delight that raptur'd poets tell.

With kind regard this little tribute view,
'Tis love's soft gift...and it is beauty's due.

LINES

TO MRS. PIERCE,

On reading the

LAUREAT'S ODE,

ON THE

KING'S BIRTH-DAY.

1803.

" All governments reciprocally abuse each other,
" And are self flatterers."—

VOLTAIRE.

WHEN war on every hand is hurl'd,
And blood is streaming through the world;
When much of error seems to me,
Alike throughout all states to be,
(Except across the Atlantic tide,
Where JEFFERSON, and truth reside)
How must each British bosom beat,
To find his land alone the seat

" Where he who rules with virtuous sway,
" Whom freemen glory to obey,
" Sees every breast the bulwark of a throne,
" His people's surest guard,—its sacred rights their own."

I bless'd my stars that Albion's shore,
Such precious blessings had in store;
Pride flush'd my cheek,...I read again
The flattering, gratifying strain,
As the proud poet's pencil drew,
Of other lands the hideous view:

" Amid the boast of tyrant-pride,
" The pomp of state—the arm'd array,
" Can all the shouts of slavery hide,
" That slaves unwilling homage pay.
" No force can shield ambition's head
" From noontide care,—from midnight dread,
" When still the monitor within,
" Searches the abode of blood and sin.

Fate after this my wanderings led,
To many a palace, many a shed;
To France, to Germany, and Prussia,
To Spain, to Switzerland, and Russia,
Through Europe generally I sped,
And much I thought, and much I read;

But ever found the courtly bard,
All good from other lands discard,
Save that, where he high seated shone,
And shar'd the favour of the throne;
All other governors, and states,
He freely thus delineates....

" Amid the boast of tyrant pride,
" The pomp of state, the arm'd array,
" Can all the shouts of slavery hide
" That slaves unwilling homage pay;
" No force can shield ambition's head
" From noontide care, from midnight dread,
" When still the monitor within,
" Searches the abode of blood and sin.

But when he strikes the golden lyre,
Inflam'd with paid and partial fire;
And of that land, where'er it be,
High sounding sings...where dwelleth he;
There thus the governors and land
He pictures with exulting hand:

" Where he who rules with virtuous sway,
" Whom freemen glory to obey,
" Sees every breast the bulwark of a throne,
" His people's surest guard, its sacred rights their own.

SONNET.

Written near a Country Church-Yard.

BUT, hark! the slow dull knell from yonder dome
Warns the rude rustic of his clay cold home.

Some peasant's gone, perhaps, whose daily toil
Was trudging on the mountains dreary side;
Or with the plough-share to correct the soil,
To tend the grazing flock, his care and pride.

With toils like these, through life he held his way,
And night repair'd the labours of the day.

Now night in longer sleep has clos'd his eyes,
A tenant of the church-yard's scant domain;
And known no more, with kindred earth he lies,
Where death extends his sad and gloomy reign.

Mindless of scenes like these, too oft' we roam,
Forget the use of life!...and that we are travelling home!

AN

EXTEMPORE SONG,

Addressed to

THE SILVER CUP,

Presented to

MR. ELLMAN, OF GLYNDE.

Jan. 1801.

AND SUNG AFTER DINNER,

At his house.

Tune,—"Behold this fair Goblet."

BEHOLD this bright goblet 'tis fill'd with the juice,
Which will fancy, and wit, and good humour produce;
As a mark of respect to its owner 'twas given,
By the names so illustrious which round it are graven.

CHORUS.

Long may'st thou pour the tide of full glee,
Joyous we,
Will drink of thee,
Happy be he,
Who owneth thee,
And his friends of thy beverage for ever make free.

Old ANACREON himself, whose generous soul
Mix'd genius, the graces, and love in his bowl,
Would have drain'd with delight, so capacious a can,
Fir'd with love of dear woman, and friendship t'ward man.
Long may'st thou pour, &c.

When the gods and the goddesses tipple above,
And the joke flies about e'en at president JOVE;
Out of goblets like this their rich nectar they drain,
And the muses all energy, wake their best strain.
Long may'st thou pour, &c.

To descend from their godships to mortals on earth,
May the sunshine of soul, sound health, and true mirth,

Be the toast round the globe, and good will and peace
Be inmates of man, and their blessings ne'er cease.
Long may'st thou pour, &c.

NOTE.

This gallon goblet has engraven on it in a round robbin, twenty-six of the nobility and principle landholders in the county of Sussex.—within the circle is this inscription.

"The undersigned truly sensible of the great advantage rendered to the sheep breeders on the South-downs, by the exertions and assiduity of Mr. John Ellman, of Glynde, in making the merits of their valuable breed of sheep generally known, and demanded, offer him this cup as a token of their esteem."

SONNET XIII.

PETRARCH TO LAURA.

From the Italian.

Written on a spot she frequently visited,... Mediterranean, off Cape Pallos.

1785.

IN happier days these plains along,
Here oft' was heard my LAURA's song.
Sweet bowers! where the pensive maid,
With all the blooming graces stray'd.

Ah! tender flowers! ah! verdure blest!
Which oft' her lovely feet have prest:
Sweet blissful haunts! dear limped rills!
Ah! happy groves, and meads, and hills!

With reverential awe I trace
My LAURA's form in every place;...
And henceforth these retreats so dear,
Must all my glowing passion share.

THE

CONVOCATION.

Respectfully inscribed

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD GRANTLEY.

" It behoves us to know our own ignorance, for this is the
" strongest mark of wisdom that the frailty of human nature
" will admit of." SEARCH's, Light of Nature pursued.

" For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight,
" His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.
POPE's Essay on Man.

THE

CONVOCATION.

Respectfully inscribed

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD GRANTLEY.

WHEN the Supreme! the great Eternal One!
All wise, all good, creation's work had done,
And given to each celestial body place,
Through infinite, illimitable space;
He threw o'er nature an eternal veil,
And wisely did its secret springs conceal.

One day, (for moral good the poet sings)
This Being round him an assembly brings,
Of doctors, sophists, and disputants loud;
A bawling, wrangling, fierce, contending crowd;
Priests, canting and denouncing, came from far,
To join the wordy, metaphysic war.

Leaders of sects from every clime appear'd,
Savage and civil, all alike were heard;
All press'd around the interesting throne,
Sanguine to prove that each was right alone.

Silence proclaim'd...when thus the Eternal said,
" Approach, my friends, without or fear or dread;
" Say who I am...from whence I came...how made,
" And say (for nature's wonders you've survey'd)
" How is supported that eternal chain,
" Which holds the planets, earth, and air, and main?

" How all the operations I perform,
" Which act in calms, in tempest, and in storm;
" How vegetation...all you see and hear...
" I manage now, or made at first appear?

" I know that prizes are propos'd below,
" For those who light (for so you call it) throw
" On subjects about which you nothing know;
" Wealth I will give,...fame, and salvation too,
" To him, who but approaches to the true."

" You are (replied a metaphysic herd)
" The essence, the existence, and the word;
" In time, and out of time, principle, end,
" Every where present, and yet no way tend;
" Having no being in or out of space,
" Yet occupying all and every place."

Of crooked atoms, elements, and matter,
Whirlwinds and light, another set 'gan chatter;
These of the supreme essence nothing said,
But made the body out, without the head.

Another tribe (of these there were but few)
Near to the God of nature boldly drew,
And speaking low..." Sire! our belief is clear,
" That you do not exist, elsewhere, or here,
" And this our mathematics make appear.
" The trembling world, with terror and affright,
" Shook at these words!...and Chaos and old night
" Resum'd a moment their horrific reign"...

When thus the God all pitying, mildly said,
" This is a sad disorder of the head,
" Withdraw from hence, nor 'mong the learned tread."

The crowd who saw how mildly God could look
On what they oft' for damning doctrines took,
Began to bring their various visions forth,
Their schemes, of guilt and ignorance the growth;
Imposing creeds, fanatic and absurd,
Their opposite translations of God's word;
Their plans for torture, persecution, burnings,
Their systems full of malice and o'erturnings;
Their schemes to root out heresy and error,
And fill the world with misery and terror;
To crush philosophy,...strike deists dead,
And be themselves alone the imposing head.

Now all confusion was...each sect proclaim'd
Their value, and all others loud defam'd.
Some could work miracles,...some were inspir'd;
With ignorance and arrogance all fir'd,
Pronounc'd, decided,...talk'd of other gods,
Of sacred writings, alcorans, talmuds;
Of intercourses with the holy ghost,
Of special favours, enlightenings, and a host
Of absolutions,...prophets,...favour'd preachers,
And each declar'd themselves, the only proper teachers.

Each sect its system, each its dogmas had,
And all were noisy, overbearing, mad.

The eternal God! the best of father's smil'd,
And thus address'd each wayward, erring child.

" Forego all fantasy,...all mystery quit,
" And to be ignorant of my laws submit;
" Your faculties on earth are bounded so,
" That of me and my reign, you nought can know.
" Try not to penetrate them,...this can't be,
" For you on earth, of earth can only see.
" Enough is given to make you good, and wise,
" Each moral law incessantly practise;
" Amuse yourselves with what my works afford,
" But ne'er decide about them or their lord;
" Promote each other's bliss, each hour you live,
" Nor precious time to disagreements give.
" Cherish love,...charity,...have simple hearts,
" Investigate no theme beyond your parts;
" Not like yourselves your heavenly father plan,
" Debase him not to any thing like man.
" Promote all happiness, and give no pain,...
" This is a doctrine clear, distinct, and plain."

" Renounce all nonsense, error, lies, and force;
" All persecution, and upbraidings coarse;
" Be friends, and brothers, through each tribe, and clime,
" Be what you may be...happy, good, sublime,...
" And trust eternity, for what is not in time."

He ceas'd...the astonish'd wranglers slunk away,
Smitten by conscious error, and dismay;
For each sect hop'd at any rate to see,
Others condemn'd...whatever it might be.

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